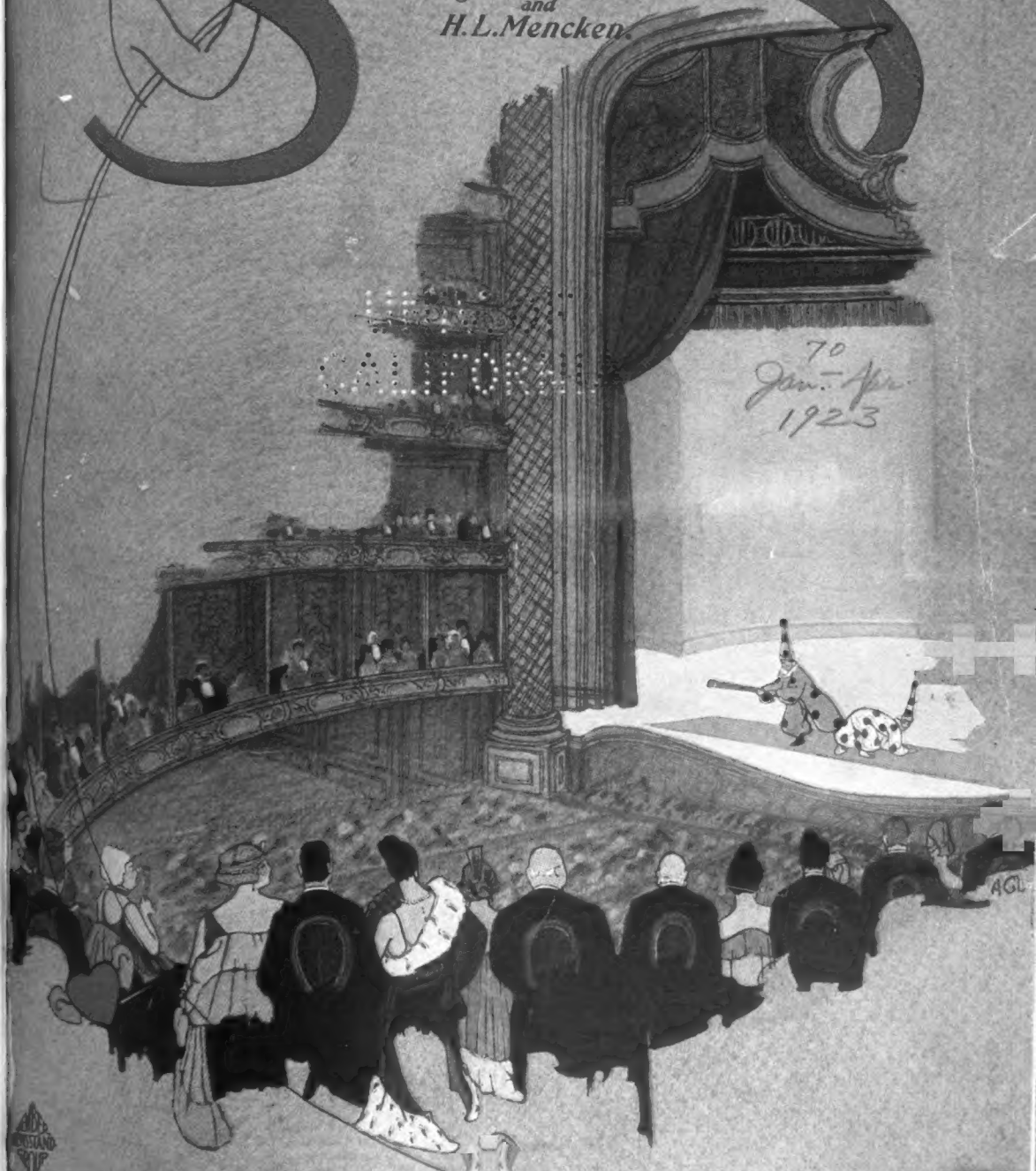


The SMART SET

Edited by
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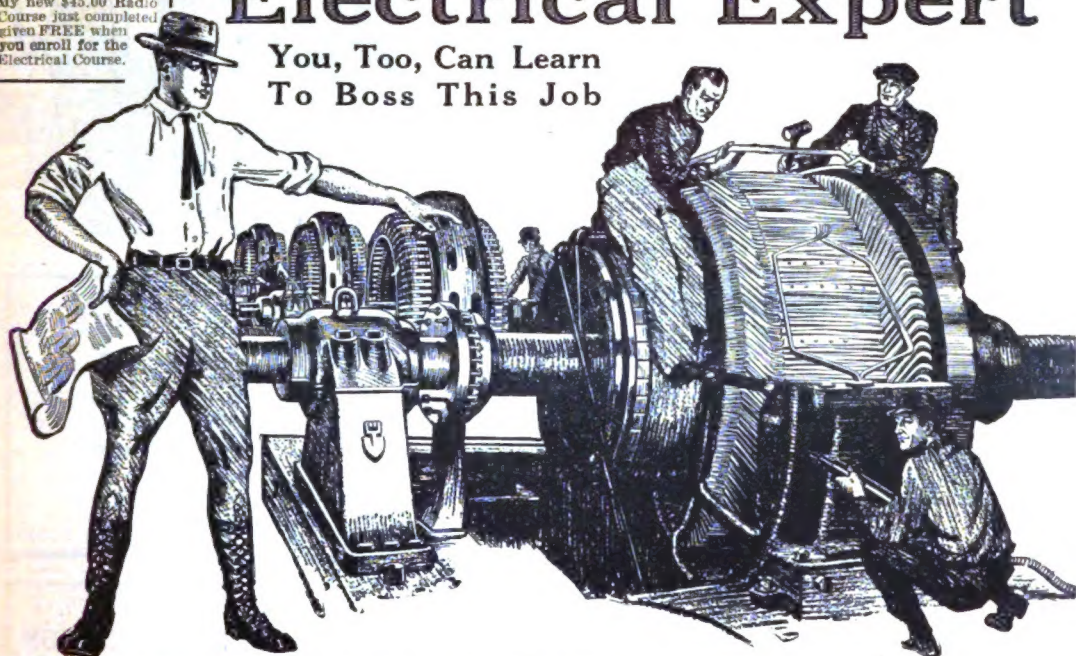
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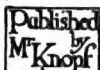
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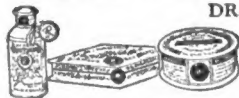
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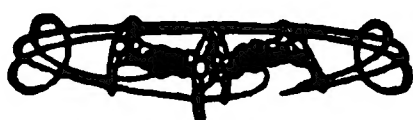
Vol. LXX

JANUARY, 1923

No. 1

The SMART SET

The
Aristocrat
Among
Magazines



UNIVERSITY OF
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Making It Safe

By Goldsmith Riley

THE Statesman turned back into the room as the last of his trusty lieutenants clasped his hand and gave expression to outraged sympathy. The door closed, leaving him alone with his brother, and all pretense of a smiling-brave-front-to-the-world dropped from him. The wounds his defeat had dealt him were displayed in the stricken droop of his shoulders, the trembling of his mouth, his dulled and anguished eyes. From the street came the sounds of the rejoicing of the victors to add to the bitterness of his downfall. At last he became aware of the sardonic eye of his brother.

"Well . . . they licked us," his brother said.

The emotion of the Statesman drew a tragic mask over his face. Then the grief that charged him spoke:

"It's not only their ingratitude that hurts me—although God knows that's bad enough. I've served the people of this State for years—all my life—worked for them—slaved for them. I'd won the right to the dignity of continuing these last few years of my usefulness in the high office of the Senate where I've served them so long, served them well. And, instead, they reward me with this colossal insult. They put up as my opponent an illiterate half-wit—scientifically speaking, a moron. And by God, they elect him!"

"You asked for it," his brother re-

plied. "Been asking for it for years. You've worked for it—built for it—throughout your entire career."

The Statesman's senatorial dignity covered his amazement.

"Perhaps you'll be good enough to explain what you mean," he said.

"I will," said his brother. "You've been a good man, Abner. To the best of your lights you've served mankind. You've had a high regard for human life per se. Your ruling idea has been to protect and conserve it. You've worked for laws to that end, helped pass them, enforced them. It is to a great extent due to your efforts that this country has been made Safe for Morons."

The Statesman, who had begun to melt at the praise, turned upon him a look of startled astonishment.

"Safe for Morons," proceeded the brother. "Take this old Job Morrell, for instance, who has just been elected to fill your seat in the Senate. In the natural course of things Nature would have eliminated him as unfit. . . I remember him when you first started on your political career, as a shiftless, harmless old imbecile with a promising habit of biting at any small grafting scheme which would soon have sent him to the poorhouse. But you helped pass blue-sky laws that made it a crime for the wise guys to take his money from him. So instead of going to the poor farm or starving to death he was able to keep at large and have twelve children by his first wife, eighteen by his second wife and ten by his third.

"Then, even before you Solons at Washington had started in to make the country a boob-preserve, you went in for local option and saw that your Prohibition was rigidly enforced. So that nineteen of Job's sons who normally would have drunk themselves into early

graves have been saved to multiply and replenish the earth—which they have done to the envy of the most ambitious Belgian hare. At least seven of the other sons probably would have become burglars or other specialized criminals with proper training and example, so they would have been eliminated from the community. But you censored their movie shows and cut out all that sort of instruction, and they didn't have half a chance. They became peaceful citizens, married early and often, and did their bit for the country: their average must be about eleven children apiece. All the daughters married, too. You persecuted a woman who lectured to them on birth control, and you fought to retain the old laws making it a crime to give them information on how to limit their spawn. So all of the girls had big families. Then you were active in establishing visiting nurses and welfare bureaus that did noble work in keeping all their babies alive. . . . That has been the spirit of your humanitarianism. And this is the way it has worked out. Your coddled morons have multiplied so fast that there are now enough of them to elect the granddaddy of the bunch to Congress."

He smiled a friendly, leering smile. "And all the time, while I was working along *with* Nature—trimming them within the law, supplying them with bootleg booze enough to cut down their efficiency to some extent, in every way I could giving aid to their enemy—and so growing justly rich and powerful—you've been looking upon me as an enemy of society."

The Statesman sighed.

"You're a hard man, Lemuel," he said.

From the streets came a distant chorus of cheering:

"Rah for Gran'pap!"



THE trouble with a girl is that after you have succeeded in overcoming her inertia, it seems almost no time until you have to take measures to overcome her momentum.

The Affair of the Murder Scenario

(A Complete Short Novel)

By Wilson Follett

(Author of "Joseph Conrad: A Short Study," "Some Modern Novelists" and "The Modern Novel")

PART I

EDITORIAL NOTE: Mr. Follett has here attempted to broaden the appeal of what has become a rather narrow and special type of fiction by creating a decidedly new sort of detective. The illustrious sleuths of fiction, from Dupin down, have excelled in a certain bloodless precision, detachment from ordinary human concerns, and what one may call the pure science of their calling. This excellence of theirs has enormously developed the tale of mystery on the side of its technical resources; but meanwhile the detective himself has gained interest as a thinking machine only to lose it as a human being. More and more we have found the human investigator reduced to the part of a scientific implement, with hardly more independent personality than one of the galvanometers and tachometers which stand in serried ranks in his laboratory cabinets. Peter Quint, it is hoped, is hardly less ingenious, resourceful, and inventive than his predecessors. But he was a human being before he was a detective; he remains one even while he is tracking down clues; and he will still remain one when the sleuths have ceased from sleuthing and the wary criminals are all at rest in Utopian jails. He remains throughout entirely normal in his sympathies, impulses, affections; and he is an urbane gentleman of the world in what may reluctantly be called his literary appreciation of character—that is, the kind of appreciation which results from shrewd reading, not of the dials on instruments of precision, but of incorrigible humanity itself.

Also—and this, it is hoped, is something of a departure—he is thoroughly human in his liability to error. He has—as the detectives of fiction do not—a clear perception that his trade is marked by an inherent tendency to dehumanize the practitioner and in the long run to vitiate his skill by causing him to attach too much importance to the pure mechanics of his craft and too little to the quick intuitive vision, the sensitiveness to minds and hearts unlike his own, for which there has as yet been invented no scientific substitute. There is something peculiarly winning about a detective who errs through too much ingenuity, too much dependence on the mechanical dovetailing of clue with clue, and who has the grace to see and admit that the solution which he is seeking is to be found in some elemental and simple psychologic factors which all the ingenuity in the world might more easily overlook than not. He is, then, what may be called the all-round detective; and it will be seen that, as a direct result of his balance and variety of gifts, he solves riddles on which either the purely scientific or the purely intuitive investigator would break his teeth in vain.

I

"I HAVE come to you, Mr. Quint, because they tell me you are a somewhat unusual detective—one who can do things that the others can't, or at any rate don't."

The speaker, a blond, moustached, well-built and well-dressed man of perhaps thirty-five, sat very straight in the chair at one end of Quint's desk, frankly

measuring the other with an intent and straight look from candid eyes.

Peter S. Quint, some seven or eight years his junior, leaned back in the leather desk chair, smiling imperceptibly as he met the other's eyes with a candor like their own. He was the smaller man of the two and, superficially, the less distinguished-looking—the sort of man who looks wholly natural and at home in either evening clothes or the other ex-

treme of shaggy tweeds, but is extinguished into a complete nonentity by the correct and well-pressed tailoring of such a man as his present interlocutor. Just now, he was in tweeds.

"If what you say is so, I had rather you found it out for yourself, Mr. Ellsworth," was all he answered.

The other's eyebrows went up.

"I believe I hadn't mentioned my name?" he remarked.

Quint made the brusque, impatient gesture of one cutting through a useless tangle.

"I suppose you thought I was trying to impress you with a show of omniscience," he said. "As a matter of fact, that sort of cheap mystification and playing to the gallery is the bane of my trade. Detectives are fond of putting on an air of pompous sagacity and pretending to know everything you are on the point of telling them. Fortune-tellers' stunts, learned from cheap fiction! We shall never get anywhere, Mr. Ellsworth, on that basis. Consider now. You are a tolerably well-known man in this town, socially and financially. You live on a huge estate just beyond the country club, and I have seen you being driven into or out of it, say, twenty times in the last year. And—your photograph was in the *Evening Record* in April last. So put it out of your head that I was trying to awe you with miracles, and just take it that my use of your name was a natural shortcut to getting on with our conference."

Mr. Ellsworth was palpably relieved.

"That's very reassuring, you know," he confessed. "Sorry I made you explain all that; yet I'm rather glad you did. Sort of makes a man feel that you're putting your brains into doing your job, instead of into entertaining your clients. Ordinarily I should have taken it that way, too. I guess I must be a little jumpy, since—"

He paused uncomfortably.

"Mind if I smoke?"

He produced and lighted a cigar.

Quint refused its fellow and helped himself to a cigarette from a chest on the desk.

"Since April, I take it," the detective supplied. "Now, won't you tell me all about it, or as much as you feel you can? Take your time about it and go as slowly as you like. I know, of course, what was in the newspapers; but I want to get the affair from your point of view. The answer to the whole riddle might turn out to be in some fact that would seem entirely uninteresting and unimportant from the newspaper point of view. Don't think of this as any sort of 'probe'; just talk about it naturally—the way you would to a friend, as nearly as you can."

"Oh, there isn't anything I wish to keep back," said Ellsworth quickly. "Had you got the impression that we were being secretive about something? No; it's just that it still knocks me to pieces to go over and over it, even in my own mind. Besides which, I've been pretty well fed up with thrashing it out with reporters and chiefs of police and well-meaning friends and amateur detectives who think they have a hunch"—he smiled wily—"until I hate the sound of my own voice, and one more question just about makes me fly off the handle. But this isn't being particularly useful to you. Forgive me, Mr. Quint."

II

"I was engaged to be married, as of course you know, to Miss Margaret Landys, of Wilmington. The engagement had been the subject of all sorts of romantic yarns in the newspapers, mainly because it was between a comparatively poor girl and what they call a rich man. As a fact, Miss Landys's poverty was disgustingly exaggerated to help out the romance—you see how that would be. She was the daughter of a comfortably well-to-do and quite irreproachable family. Her father, I believe, died when she was a baby; but she and her mother were for years perfectly well known in Wilmington society. So there was nothing in the faintest degree peculiar or mysterious about her origin; she wasn't any ragged Cinderella, as they contrived to be al-

ways implying. It is loathsome to have to go into all this, but, you see, the press unconsciously gave the whole affair a false color. It wasn't *my* fault that the damned reporters were mostly interested in the size of my fortune.

"I am going to ask you to take it on faith, Mr. Quint, that from beginning to end everything was straight between Miss Landys and me. I mean, we had never quarreled or had any sort of trouble or disagreement or misunderstanding of any kind. We—we loved each other as I suppose few people ever do. You smile a little, to yourself, at that? Yes, I suppose all lovers think the same about themselves. Oh, well, I have not come here to talk about our devotion. What I mean is, we were absolutely in each other's trust, without concealment or reservation. Miss Landys had never been involved in any affair that could have changed my attitude toward her, or in any affair at all; and I was involved in none myself. My mother adored her, and adores her memory; and Margaret's mother is very near to us both, and always will be. So, you see, there was nothing but enthusiastic approval on either side.

"Let me speak very plainly, Mr. Quint. If you cannot help me in this thing without imagining that there was something to be explained in our relation to each other, or that there was some man who wanted Margaret kept from me because he had a right to her himself, or that there was some woman who wanted her out of the way in order to keep her hold on me—why, then I must simply ask you to say so straight out, and we will stop before we begin."

Quint made a calming and deprecatory gesture.

"My dear man," he said, "what on earth can you have been subjected to that has got you into this state of self-consciousness and nerves? Please, please! You must take my word for it, in turn, that I have absolutely no inclination to suspect anything different from what you tell me, in *those* directions. As a matter of ordinary horse sense, you wouldn't be coming to me if

you had anything to cover up—but that has nothing to do with it. It is wholly easy and natural for me to take you as a person of the most scrupulous honor—why not? So pray don't go on suspecting me of being suspicious."

This, if it were not superlative acting, could only have been the expression of a warmly sympathetic and humane impulse, such as to carry Quint for a moment quite beyond the boundaries of his profession. Ellsworth looked his gratitude.

"If you had had to do," he began, "with a beast called Hamerton—"

"The chief of the police detective crew?"

Ellsworth nodded. "For six weeks now I've had to hold myself down and give civil answers to questions that were downright insulting to myself, my mother, Margaret's mother, and—Margaret herself. There wasn't anybody else in sight for them to investigate, so they've investigated us. But I'm not getting on.

III

"Miss LANDYS and her mother were visiting us from the first week of April. We were to have been married very quietly on the nineteenth—here, rather than in Wilmington, simply because of my mother, who has a weak heart and doesn't travel if it can possibly be avoided. On the night of the sixteenth, Margaret was—murdered."

He shivered over the word, as if to let it pass his lips were to throw open the gate of his mind to the reality of a hideous fact whose entrance he would have resisted to the uttermost.

"We were having dinner at eight that night. There were to be a few friends—eight in all, besides ourselves. Margaret and I had got in from a long ride together about six, and we dressed early. We were both downstairs by quarter past seven. The drawing-room is on the south side of the house, with French windows opening on the south piazza. It was an unusually warm evening for April, and the windows were

open. The moon was just before the full. We stepped out onto the piazza and walked up and down it together, not talking very much, because—we were so happy. We had at least a clear half-hour before anyone would come. Little things like that were enough to make us—the way we were then. . . . Forgive me for going on in this way, Quint. Charge it up to my relief at finding you a man of sensibilities, a man one can talk to.

"We walked back and forth there on the piazza. The moonlight was growing brighter and brighter. Pretty soon the butler came to call me to the telephone. Margaret threw her scarf around her shoulders—she had on a flimsy sort of dinner dress—and went down the south steps of the piazza. She was going to stroll down to the summer-house and back while I was telephoning. There is a summer house, an eight-sided stone affair, very Byzantine and over-decorated and rather absurd, down the south walk, about a hundred yards from the house. The walk is winding and bordered with magnolia trees, and these were just coming into full bloom; it was an extraordinarily early spring. Margaret loved that walk; every day and every pleasant evening we strolled down to the summer-house and round among the forsythia, and there wasn't a shrub or flower on the place that she wasn't keeping track of from day to day, to see how far it had come along since the day before.

"Well, that was the last I ever saw of her alive—going down her favorite walk in her filmy dress with the light scarf across her shoulders, under that cloud of magnolia bloom in the bright moonlight, and turning at the curve, just before she went out of sight behind the shrubbery, to blow me a kiss."

He paused. "Oh, if I had only not left her then! If I had only let the damned telephone go to the maker of it! . . .

"My call took me some minutes. The hall telephone had been knocked over and was broken, and I had to go to the one upstairs. When I finally came

down again, my mother and Mrs. Landys were in the drawing-room. It was nearly eight. I stepped out on to the piazza and down the path, to meet Margaret. Half-way to the summer-house I called to her, twice over. There was no answer. That seemed odd, because I knew she could be only a few yards from me. Something about the queer silence scared me all of a sudden. I walked faster, calling again and more loudly. The last few yards I ran.

"She was lying in a heap at the foot of the summer-house steps. I gathered her up—her body was warm, but somehow not responsive as a live body is—and hurried back up the path, shouting crazily to my mother. I know I was daft with terror, for I never once thought of my mother's heart or of what the shock might do to it. I ran into the drawing-room, crying out that Margaret had been hurt somehow, and laid her down on the divan. It bowled my mother over for a second; I thought, when I saw her face, that I had killed her. Then she was steady as a rock again, ready to help. She was worth three of me. Women, Quint! they're wonders—women like my mother and Margaret's mother. . . .

IV

"I DON'T remember things any too coherently after that, I'm afraid. I know that the two women were trying to bring some sign of life out of Margaret as she lay there, and one of the maids was telephoning for Doctor Rackham, and another was running all over the house to fetch things, and the doorbell was jangling senselessly every few minutes, and Pardee was turning away the guests at the door and telling them that Miss Landys was ill. All I could do was to beat my head with my fists, kneeling there, and beg *her* to speak to me.

"But she did not speak. Her eyes were open, Quint—open and staring—bloodshot, too. They follow me now, and I see them when I wake suddenly at night. They come into my dreams

and wake me up in a cold sweat. God! what ugly thing can she have seen in the instant of her death to make her eyes like that?

"This is raving, of course. It was the choking that made her eyes look so; I understand that well enough, really. She had been choked to death, Quint—held as if in a vise and choked to death without a cry, by fingers that must have had the strength of steel hooks. She was dead when I picked her up. . . . Quint, that—that beast of hell had wiped his bloody hands on her scarf."

The muscles along Ellsworth's jaw twitched and stiffened; his eyes, which had been tremulous and moist the instant before, were suddenly dry and hard. It occurred to Quint that the author of the ghastliness just recited would be doing himself a very good service by keeping out of the range of this cold fury of the man whose heart he had so abominably lacerated. At the same time it was perhaps lucky for Ellsworth that he could be capable of such anger. There was no telling what the cumulative effect of his brooding might otherwise have been on his mind.

Quint deliberated, waiting for the other to regain his self-command.

"Now, try to be patient with a question or two that you'll recognize the soundness of," he then began. "We want to eliminate everything we can, to start with. First of all, is it clear that the motive of simple robbery won't hold water? The newspaper reports, as I remember them, spoke of an engagement ring and a very valuable pearl necklace which were not—disturbed. Is that correct?"

Again Ellsworth's smile was somewhat wry.

"As true as a good deal of the printed stuff," he said. "The ring was a beryl which had belonged to my mother's grandmother—a very odd thing which Miss Landys preferred to anything I could possibly have got. It may have been of some interest to an antiquarian—I can't say. Intrinsically, it was worth—why, next to nothing, I suppose. And the 'twenty-thousand-

dollar pearl necklace,' described as my 'engagement gift' to Miss Landys, was really an old string of Roman pearls, such as I dare say your stenographer wears if she happens to have the right complexion. They were not disturbed—that is true. If anyone had supposed them valuable enough to commit such a crime for, it seems as if he would have carried them away with him, on the same theory. But no—there was nothing gone."

"So far, so good. Now—I hate to ask you this, but I really must be sure—there was no evidence of an attempted criminal assault?"

Ellsworth jerked uncontrollably to his feet. His face was tortured, in the second before he covered it with his hands.

"That is a thought I can't stand, Quint," he said, "—in connection with her. I simply can't stand the horror of the bare thought. . . . No, there was no such indication, thank God—not the faintest possibility of any such thing. Rackham was absolutely positive and reassuring there, and so was the coroner. You might ask them yourself."

"I rather wish I had, since it gave you such a wrench. Still, it is better to have absolute frankness. Generally speaking, I prefer to find out what my clients know from themselves. It's little satisfaction to me to know things they aren't aware I know. As for this point, it needn't come up again."

Quint got to his feet, too, and stood facing his visitor.

"I'm very glad it's that way, for your sake," he presently said; and with a hand on Ellsworth's arm he gently pushed him back into the chair by the desk.

V

"THERE'S only one more thing to bother you about now," he resumed. "Tomorrow, with your leave, I want to go over the south part of your grounds. Until then, what interests me is that telephone call that took you upstairs."

"Oh, that!" said Ellsworth matter-of-factly. "There's nothing for you in that. It was simply a message from one

of my dinner guests, to say that he had just been called to New York by a very urgent telegram. So you see—"

"How did the downstairs telephone happen to be dead?" asked Quint suddenly.

Ellsworth thought a moment.

"Miss Landys and I, between us, managed to do that," he said. "That afternoon, when she came down dressed for riding, she was pulling on her gloves, and she carried her riding crop under her arm. I was feeling very gay and, I suppose, silly"—he winced slightly—"and I caught her up and danced her along the hall. The handle of her crop caught in the cord of the telephone on the table, and over it went with a crash. After that there was nothing to be got out of it except a ridiculous buzzing noise. We were in a hurry, so I didn't stop to tell Pardee to have it fixed. So, you see, there's absolutely nothing for you to be ingenious about, in *that* quarter."

Quint accepted this without looking in the least disconcerted, but provisionally, as if it were by no means the end of the matter.

"The dinner guests that night were all old friends of yours, I presume?" he next asked.

"Why, yes, I suppose you'd call them so. The Frederic Lampsons I've known all my life—grew up with 'em. Harkness is my junior business partner, really, though he's not actually in the firm name yet; he was with his fiancée, an exceedingly nice girl from Washington. The Joel Byrnes were asked because Doris—Mrs. Byrne—has been almost like a daughter to my mother ever since her own mother died. She was old Parker Winthrop's second daughter, you know. Then there were two older men, bachelors: my mother's cousin, Harvey Stilton—yes, the big-game hunter and globe-trotter; Mrs. Landys was crazy to meet him—and Judge Trask, one of my fathers' executors. . . . Oh! I forgot to tell you this: what kept me so long at the telephone was trying to get hold of Harkness, to see if he couldn't stop at the club and catch

someone at the last minute to fill in for Byrne. But Harkness had already gone along to call for Miss Otway—his fiancée."

Quint addressed a frowning and absent scrutiny to the pile of papers on his desk.

"So it was Mr. Joel Byrne who was called out of town?"

He shot a quick glance at his informant.

"Why, yes, it was. But—what on earth are you getting at? I may as well say, first as last, that the notion of trying to connect Doris Winthrop's husband with—why, it's simply too preposterous for words, and there's absolutely no use in your taking that line."

VI

QUINT deliberated again, with his quizzical and remote look. When he spoke, it was in a desultory and rather detached fashion, and what he said seemed entirely irrelevant to their present affair.

"Do you happen to remember the Agnes Forestier case last December? You could hardly escape the headlines. Well, how many persons do you suppose were detained by our amiable friend Hamerton, for various periods from a few hours to several weeks, and put through the torture of the third degree—some of them as many as ten times over on successive days? Exactly seventeen persons. I know; I have been through the detailed records of the whole case. And of those seventeen, how many do you suppose knew anything whatever that threw light on the crime? Not one lone forsaken soul of the whole forlorn lot!

"It is that sort of idiotic waste and infliction of needless suffering, Mr. Ellsworth, that is the curse of the usual police methods. I take it as an important part of my job to avoid all that. As a matter of fact, the use of quite commonplace detective skill, plus ordinary horse sense, would have eliminated all but one or two of those seventeen innocent suspects without so much as approaching

them personally. They need never have known that the police were aware of their existence.

"Do you get my point? Put it, if you like, that I am merely going through a process of elimination—eliminating everything I can—before I even commit myself to a tentative theory about the crime. How on earth can I eliminate your man Byrne if you ruck up at my perfectly simple questions about him? You may take it as absolutely guaranteed, Mr. Ellsworth, that I shall not so much as breathe a suspicion against any living human being *until I know what I am talking about.*"

He hammered the words home with strokes of his right fist into his left palm.

"I may just possibly, by the time I am through with this, produce you a real murderer. But it will be either that or an absolute blank. I leave it to Hamerton and the others to hand out a bushel-basketful of unsubstantiated charges and get half the community up in arms against them. It is a thousand chances to one that Mr. Byrne is as ignorant of how this thing happened as—just now—you and I are. I hope he is, for your sake, and Mrs. Byrne's, and your mother's, and everybody's. Now, what I must ask you to bear in mind is that, when you tell me things—always in the very strictest confidence, remember—you are doing it, not to convict any person and not to clear any person, but solely to *find out the truth*, whatever it is."

"All right, Quint—all right! I dare say I was touchy and unreasonable about it. I quite deserved your lecture. Charge it up to the insulting absurdities I've been hounded with persistently, night and day, for weeks past. I'll try not to 'ruck up' again. You may take me as a thoroughly obedient child."

Ellsworth's smile was disarmingly compliant, a handsome and frank retraction of his previous slight truculence. "What else do you want to know?"

Quint accepted the concession and resumed the sequence of his questions with instant literalness.

"Several things," he answered. "But first I should like to know exactly what time the telephone call came and where it came from. Was it from Mr. Byrne's house?"

Ellsworth reflected. "The time, as nearly as we have been able to place it, was not very much earlier than twenty minutes to eight, and certainly not later. It was six or seven minutes of eight when I went out through the drawing-room again. So everything had to happen in that interval of fifteen minutes—twenty at the very outside. I was quite a while at the telephone, you see, trying to get hold of Harkness; and of course I stopped in the drawing-room to chat two minutes with mother and Mrs. Landys. As a matter of fact, it was Mrs. Byrne who was on the wire. Her husband had just called her up to explain about his having to take the 8:11 and to ask her to make his excuses to us."

Quint digested this slowly. His face betrayed nothing, insinuated nothing. "Then you don't know where Mr. Byrne called her from, or exactly when, except that it must have been a little before twenty minutes of eight?"

"No. I suppose from downtown somewhere—his club, most likely."

"You didn't think it odd that Mr. Byrne shouldn't have called you himself?"

"Oh, Lord, no! He probably figured that he hadn't time for both calls, and it was obviously more important, any way you take it, that he should speak to his wife."

"Still, he had a minimum of thirty-five minutes to make his train, by the smallest reckoning."

"Yes, but probably he had to dine in that thirty-five minutes. They drop the diner off that train at the station here, as I once discovered to my cost. . . . For all I know, Byrne may have had to get out of his dinner clothes before he went to the station. I haven't a doubt he keeps an emergency bag packed at the club; I do myself."

"H'm—I see. . . . Wouldn't Mrs. Byrne, in the circumstances, have been rather more likely to call your mother

than you, unless she had been definitely asked to speak to you?"

"Oh, Lord, no!" exploded Ellsworth for the second time. "One doesn't bother mother with details if it can be helped. . . . If she *had* asked for mother—and she may have, for all I know—Pardee would have said that she was still dressing, and wouldn't I do just as well? It's really entirely simple, you see."

Quint nodded, rather noncommittally, even absently. Then he changed the subject. "The servants are all accounted for during those twenty minutes, as the newspaper accounts said?"

"All of them, completely. They were all in the house, and none of them saw or heard anything. Every last one of them adored Miss Landys, anyway."

Quint accepted this easily, almost perfunctorily.

"Well, Mr. Ellsworth," he said after a pause, "I don't believe there's anything else—now. Tomorrow I want a quiet look round your place. Shall we say three? Good enough. Till tomorrow, then."

The two shook hands warmly.

VII

As soon as the door closed behind Ellsworth, Quint picked up his telephone and called Western Union.

"This is the private secretary of Mr. Joel Byrne speaking—no, B-y-r-n-e," he said. "Mr. Byrne received a telegram from New York the late afternoon or early evening of April sixteenth. It was telephoned to him. Please look it up in your file and make a copy of it for him. Yes, yes—he received it all right enough, over the telephone. Now he wants an exact record of it. It's to settle a dispute about an important detail. Yes, find it now, please. I'll send a messenger as soon as you tell me you have found it."

He waited, drumming with his knuckles on the desk.

When the voice came again it startled him and sent an electric gleam into his eyes. What it said was: "You must be

mistaken about the date; there was no telegram to a Mr. Joel Byrne, B-y-r-n-e, on April sixteenth."

Peter Quint hung up the receiver. Its click was as the registered outward expression of something that happened at the same instant within his own mind.

PART 2

I

WHEN, the next day a little after three, Quint sat talking with Ellsworth in the little stone summer-house on the south side of the Ellsworth grounds, he could no longer have said as candidly as before that he had no theory of the crime. He realized, of course, that there were still a good many more chances against than for the truth of his theory. He could invent a large assortment of reasons, not expressly criminal, for a man's finding it convenient to be called out of town by an imaginary telegram—reasons all the way from the hounding of a malignantly persistent creditor (though this seemed a slightly humorous speculation in connection with one who had lately married a fair slice of the Winthrop millions) to a secret assignation somewhere out of town.

But the combination of details in themselves trivial—the brusque excuse and departure, the sending of the message through another person, and the seeming non-existence of the alleged telegram, all coupled with the occurrence of the murder at a house in which the inventor of the telegram had been expected as a guest—certainly seemed to have connected a particular person with Ellsworth's tragedy in a striking enough way to call for investigation; whereas nothing had hitherto arisen to effect the connection, in Quint's mind, between this tragedy and any other person whomsoever. Quint had, moreover, an impression that Ellsworth regarded Byrne with distinct aversion, as a somewhat ineligible outsider who, because he was "Doris Winthrop's husband," had to be taken into a somewhat exclu-

sive confraternity on equal and intimate terms, but who would have had no place in it on his own personal credentials.

This impression was based on nothing more tangible than Ellsworth's manner in speaking of the Byrnes, and he knew very well that Ellsworth would never have admitted as much in explicit words. Indeed, his dislike of Byrne might be subconscious, undefined even in his own thoughts. Nevertheless Quint's sense of that dislike was so vivid that he had it almost on the tip of his tongue to say:

"I will tell you something about this Byrne of yours, whom I have barely heard of and never seen: he is a queer bird, a rank outsider, perhaps definitely an adventurer and fortune-hunter. And I will tell you something about yourself, too: you don't like him, and you wonder what on earth Miss Doris Winthrop could ever have seen in the fellow that made him worth her marrying. Naturally, the code of your class and group forbids you to admit any of this—but it is so."

What remained a yawning blank in Quint's tentative theory was the whole question of a motive. But, ultimately, it would be easier to construct the motive from the person, granted that he had found the person, than to find a clue to the perpetrator in any one of the score of possible motives involved—motives not one of which, so far as Quint had made out, led to any specific person at all. The crime had been committed—that was indubitable, whereas even the existence of a comprehensible motive for it was still in the realm of pure conjecture. The net effect of these reflections was to generate in Quint's mind a powerful and consuming interest in the personality of the man called Joel Byrne.

II

IN this second interview Quint talked little with Ellsworth, and that desultorily. The two strolled as though aimlessly up and down the crooked path between the summer-house and the south

piazza of the house. Quint's eyes searching and memorizing every detail of the scene in which, under the moonlighted magnolia bloom of six weeks ago, Margaret Landys had walked to her strange death.

The place would be at night, he realized, an almost uniquely secure and inviting place for a crime of violence. The house—a low, immensely sprawling structure of yellow brick, irregularly expanded by additions—crowned the highest point of extensive and elaborately landscaped grounds, which sloped evenly away from it south and east. The house faced east, to the main road of smooth asphalt, on which was a trolley line to the country club and the more pretentious suburban residential section. The south side of the grounds was bounded by a narrow dirt road, little traveled, which led from the main road straight west for half a mile, over a hill and into a district of factory tenements, from which a second trolley line led down into the city. Between the house and this dirt road the slope was a complication of formal terraced gardens, wild greenery, and luxuriant shrubs—a place in which, even by daylight, it would be extremely difficult to find a person bent on not being found, and in which at night it would have been easy to shadow another person at a few paces' distance or steal upon him to within arm's length. Midway of this south slope, nearly invisible in a huddle of rhododendrons, was the summer-house.

The motor driveway and the footpath to the house entered through the same gate, at the southeast corner of the grounds, where the two roads came together at a right angle. The open gate was simply a part of the tall fence of iron spikes which surrounded the entire estate. The driveway swung in an even curve up the hill to the front of the great house and then away to its main exit farther north; but the footpath, diverging, looped farther west among the terraced gardens of the south lawn, coming out at the summer-house. Its continuation thence to the house was that magnolia-bordered walk from the

south piazza, down which Margaret Landys had vanished on the fatal night.

III

"WHAT brand of cigarettes do you stock your cabinet with, Mr. Ellsworth?" asked Quint, as he and his host were passing up this walk to the house.

Ellsworth named over two or three brands—club and hotel specialties—which he occasionally bought. "Why? Is your case empty?"

"Oh, no. I was going to ask you if you ever happened to run across a cigarette called *Nepenthe*. A quite extraordinary thing. Try it some time."

"I'm afraid I'm no one to go by, as a fact," said Ellsworth deprecatingly. "I am that most dreadful of all things, a cigar smoker. As for cigarettes, I get what my friends say they like. *Nepenthe*, you say?"

Quint nodded and let it pass. The fingers of his left hand, though, closed verifyingly on the slight bulge of a cigarette stub carefully folded in a handkerchief in his coat pocket; and suddenly this charred remnant, picked up on a trifling impulse, seemed as if it might turn out to signify something after all. He had retrieved it, a few minutes earlier, down by the summer-house. Ellsworth and he had sat within the place, facing each other on the built-in benches by the entrance and talking. Quint's arm lay carelessly along the rail; and in this posture he had found it natural to look over the edge and downward. His eye was caught by the white of this cigarette end, lying on the bare ground at the very base of the summer-house, just where it would naturally be dropped by a smoker sitting precisely where he, Quint, now sat. It might have been there for a long time; the overhang of the eaves and the massed, water-proof foliage of the rhododendron thicket would have protected it from the weather.

It was ten to one, of course, that Ellsworth or one of his friends had dropped it there. Still, when Ellsworth had left him for a moment in order to give some

directions to the head gardener a few paces off, Quint slipped down the steps and behind the rhododendrons and picked up the fragment. It was well enough preserved for him easily to make out the name—an odd one, which he had never seen before in such a place—in spidery blue script on the white paper. He tucked it into a fold of his handkerchief and kept it.

His discovery, now, that Ellsworth had never smoked the brand and, like himself, had never even heard of it, struck him as perhaps justifying his original impulse.

IV

ON the steps of the broad south piazza, Quint, on the point of taking leave of his host, took simultaneously a final look at the terrain, outspread before and beneath his glance, in which the mysterious and appalling crime had been committed. The summer-house, exactly in the middle of this terrain and almost wholly concealed by shrubbery, was equidistant from the house and from the iron gate at which the footpath emerged.

It was comparatively reasonable to suppose that some person who had his own motives for wishing Margaret Landys out of the way had been lurking in or by the summer-house at the instant when, by a stroke of chance merely, she had gone there alone, walking practically into his arms. And yet the detective, try as he would, could not shake off his intuitive belief that the murderer had *caused* her to be left alone, had had reason to expect her there unaccompanied. Translated into concrete terms, this could only mean that the telephone message to Ellsworth had been expressly designed to provide the slayer with his opportunity.

But this seemed to presuppose that the murderer had been, moment by moment, within sight and almost within earshot of his victim. It presupposed, moreover, that he had had access to a telephone practically on the spot; otherwise how could he have planned the call for a

moment at which it would be likely to remove Ellsworth from the scene, at the same time leading his victim where he wanted her? Mr. Joel Byrne had called his wife from some point unknown and had asked her, presumably, to call Ellsworth at once; and, presumably, she had done just that. Where could that unknown telephone station have been, to enable Byrne to resort to it and yet be on the scene a moment later, at the second when his wife's ensuing call took Ellsworth away? There seemed to be no possibility of such a station—except, indeed, in the house itself. To have gone across to the country club and back would have taken at least twenty minutes—not to speak of the danger to Byrne involved in his appearing there when he was supposed to be downtown making hurried, last-minute preparations to catch a train.

Quint was aware that his speculations had become rather fantastic. Yet every attempt to get his theory back to solid ground seemed only to lead it farther into a quaking bog of extravagance. Suppose, for instance, that Byrne and his wife, née Doris Winthrop, had worked in collusion? At this point the detective's mind leaped back in a strong revulsion against his entire theory. Besides, the preposterous idea of collusion explained nothing; there would still have had to be a person on the spot observing Ellsworth and his fiancée, in order to time Mrs. Byrne's message; and—that person on the spot would still have had to use a telephone. Besides, Quint strongly suspected that, if Byrne were actually the murderer, his act had had its inception in a powerful wish to keep from his wife's knowledge something that the living presence of his victim might have been the means, sooner or later, of divulging.

The young detective was all but on the point of giving his whole set of gratuitous and damaging suspicions an angry parting kick out the front door of his mind. The one consideration which restrained him was the momentary lack of any alternative theory whatever. Somehow, he could not let this one quite

go until he had definitely disproved it—provided only that he could disprove it without ever having uttered a hint of it to those who would, very properly, feel themselves insulted by his having so much as lent it house-room in his most secret thoughts.

V

THESE disordered and inconclusive reflections were passing through Quint's mind while, standing with Ellsworth on the steps of the south piazza and looking off over the stretch of grounds bordered by the high iron fence, he was exchanging the commonplaces of leave-taking. At the instant of their handshake his attention was jerked back to the concrete realities of his problem by his first conscious glimpse of an object which, though he must have seen it a half dozen times before, had never recorded itself in his memory.

"Just what is that shanty for?" he asked. "Do you see what I mean? Outside the fence, there—about fifty yards from the corner."

He was pointing toward a small portable shack of unpainted wood—the sort of sentry-box affair which commonly appears overnight on the scene of a new contracting job, to serve variously as office, pay desk and tool house. It stood, not on the main road, but on the dirt road south of the Ellsworth grounds, just under the third telegraph pole from the corner, and almost touching the spiked fence.

"Oh, that thing!" said Ellsworth. "They stuck it there when they were doing over the road between here and Nixon's Corner. It seems to have got overlooked in the shuffle, doesn't it? I might have called up someone, ordinarily, and seen about getting it taken away, now that the job is over. But—you see how it is—I haven't yet come alive to such things. . . . The men were paid off there, I imagine; anyway, I used to see them trooping over to it on Saturday noons when they got through."

"But when was the road finished? About the end of April, wasn't it?"

"Or a little later. I know we had to use the back driveway the last week of March and all of April, when we came in from north of here."

"Davenport & Lowell had the contract, didn't they? I think I remember seeing their shingle out, now that I think of it."

"Yes. Funny, too, their leaving their property lying about that way. But what has that got to do with—?"

Quint's gesture was brusque, even testy.

"Nothing whatever, very likely," he said. "But do you mean to tell me that it never occurred to all these industrious police investigators of yours to *find out* whether it has anything to do with what happened here? That not one of the whole admirable lot has even remarked its existence?" There was a touch of droll irascibility in his contemptuous dismay. He strode back and forth on the piazza in jerky strides, frowning.

Ellsworth was merely blank and baffled.

"If you want a look at it," he said, "I'll have the gardener go down and unlock the near gate, so that you won't have to go clear round."

Quint wheeled suddenly to face him, an odd fixity in his stare.

"There's a gate in the fence, right by it," continued Ellsworth explanatorily. "There used to be a path straight to that gate; but there seemed to be no use for it, so we had it turfed over, and the gate has been locked for years. Shall I get you the key?"

"Don't bother, thank you; I'll go round. Besides," added Quint drily, "I may pick up something else that's been overlooked, on the way. No—don't go with me. I've taken a quite unreasonable amount of your time already."

VI

HE shook hands again with Ellsworth and was off down the path. With no more than a glance at the summer-house he hurried on down toward the south-east gate.

Even before he had reached it he

was near enough to the contractor's shanty to make out a detail which strongly tended to confirm—he hardly knew whether to say his worst fears or his most buoyant hopes. He could distinctly see that a wire, or wires, entered the roof of the little shack from the telegraph pole above. That insignificant cubicle of rough boards was, or lately had been, a temporary station of the city's telephone system.

With this detail of the missing telephone accounted for, the main outlines of the crime itself took coherent dramatic shape in Quint's imagination, subject, however, to revisions in detail when he actually examined the cubicle itself. It stood close to the iron fence. Its front or south side consisted largely of a locked door which opened outward; the back and east side were of blank boards; the west side contained, instead of an ordinary window, a flat ledge or shelf projecting outward, and, just above it, a small rectangular window, hardly more than a pigeon-hole, covered on the inside by one solid board, intended, Quint judged, either to slide upward in grooves or else to open inward on hinges and hook up to the wall.

The door, which he tried and examined carefully, was fastened by an automatic lock on the inside; and there was no sign that the door had ever been forced or the lock changed. But the hinged or sliding window bore on its lower edge, unmistakably gouged into the soft wood, the mark of some prying instrument, as a chisel, screwdriver, or—and here Quint's thought leaped forward excitedly—a *cold chisel*. For a cold chisel implied, rather naturally, a motor-car; and a motor-car, left standing, perhaps unlighted, a hundred yards farther up the deserted country road, would make it easily possible for the man who had committed a ghastly crime on the Ellsworth grounds at twenty—or five—minutes of eight to be on the 8:11 for New York.

This was a point which had slightly bothered Quint before; for he could not imagine that Byrne, supposing him to be the man, would either have taken

the main trolley line two or three hundred yards from the scene of his crime, or asked a lift of some passing driver. Either course would have been too riskily conspicuous—and the alternative, walking a half-mile to the comparatively slow and irregular West Avenue trolley, would almost certainly have landed him at the station too late for his train. Somehow, Quint felt absolute conviction that Joel Byrne had taken the 8:11 train; that, if necessary, he could even prove that he had taken it. He had been cool and crafty enough to make it well-nigh impossible for suspicion to fall his way: but if it should fall his way, then his telephone call to his wife—from downtown, it would inevitably be assumed—a few minutes before the crime, coupled with his taking a New York train a few minutes after it, would constitute a very fair alibi indeed. About his coolness and craft Quint felt no more doubt than he had now come to feel about his identity.

The detective was sure that the telephone, if not there now, had been there; the wiring through the roof of the shanty was unmistakable. Still, he had a fancy for seeing the actual instrument if it were there. Wedging himself between the shanty and the iron fence, he had the luck to find a knot-hole at the junction of two of the vertical boards; and through this peep-hole, once his eyes became accustomed to the dimness inside, he could make out the telephone instrument. It stood just inside the window, on the ledge or shelf corresponding to that outside; so that one who used it would not even have to enter the tiny structure at all.

Once he had pried the window open, he could put his hand on the telephone and talk into it through the pigeon-hole, with the added advantage that the building itself would be between his body and the lighted main thoroughfare a short distance away.

VII

IN the process of gratifying his needless curiosity, Quint stumbled on still

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another detail which helped his imagination dramatize the events of the evening of April sixteenth. Backing out from between the fence and the shack—for he was in too close quarters to turn with comfort—he pressed hard against the fence with his shoulder; and as he did so a section of it yielded and swung a few inches away from him. What he then perceived was that he had inadvertently opened the old disused gate into Ellsworth's grounds—the gate which, Ellsworth had said, had been locked for years. The contractor's shack had been so placed that about two feet of the gate, including the lock and the latch, overlapped the rear side of the tiny building; and here was this supposedly locked gate opening at the merest touch! Moreover, the comparatively unruined condition of the latch attested that the gate had been opened and closed repeatedly in the near past.

Quint found himself wondering sardonically about the activities of Hamerton and his subordinates of the detective bureau. If they had been able to currycomb Ellsworth's grounds for weeks on end, and to subject Ellsworth and all his family and servants to desperate grillings—making them feel insulted in the process—all without finding out about this unlocked gate, what on earth did they consider that they *had* found out?

As for himself, he had no illusions about the sufficiency of his discoveries thus far. He perfectly realized that his frail web of purely circumstantial evidence was as yet legally insufficient to sustain the weight of a fly; and, in his peculiar code of ethics or professional etiquette, he would still not be justified in breathing an innuendo of suspicion against any person. Even in his own mind he was perplexed, baffled, and tantalized by the complete failure of the evidence to suggest a vestige of intelligible motive for the thing that had been done.

But in his own thoughts he was sure enough of his man, sure of the steps by which the crime had been approached and consummated. The

sequence of these steps enacted itself, with only a hiatus here and there, in his fancy, as a drama in which his point of view was, curiously, that of the criminal.

Byrne drives into the south road from the other end, from West Avenue. He stops his motor-car behind the clump of bushes a few hundred yards west of the gate behind the telephone booth—details which, somehow, he has made himself acquainted with previously. From his tool kit he extracts a cold chisel. He goes to the shanty, makes sure there is no one near, and pries open the window, fastened inside with a mere wooden button. He looks at his watch; it is a little after seven.

He enters the gate, makes his way over soundless turf toward the house. He passes the summer-house, perhaps, keeping on in the shelter of the bushes. There is no one down. He goes back to the summer-house to wait. His nerves are strained and a-quiver. Dare he light a cigarette? He does so, in the shelter of the rhododendrons, abolishes the match quickly, and takes two or three quick, deep inhalations, covering the glow with cupped hands.

Suddenly there is a lighted doorway, the sound of voices emerging through it. He slips up the steps into the summer-house, in order, by raising his level, to see over the tops of the intervening shrubbery. At the same time he drops his cigarette over behind the bushes, after stubbing out its fire on the railing.

He can make out, passing and re-passing the lighted *porte-fenêtre* of the drawing-room, the two figures—Ellsworth, one of whose awaited guests he is, and that other whose death he has so coolly willed and planned.

He runs swiftly, noiselessly to the gate, pushes back the window, reaches for the telephone on the ledge inside, gets his connection and gives his message. He represents himself as at his club, about to change his clothes and rush for a train. His wife is to telephone to Ellsworth immediately and apologize for him. . . . He sets the telephone back, closes the window

softly, and glides back through the gate toward the summer-house.

He is in time to see the butler approach Ellsworth, deliver a message. Ellsworth vanishes through the doorway; the other figure descends the steps and disappears behind massed shrubbery—approaching him through the moonlight.

(Query: How is he sure in advance that she will come? Has he been watching her for days past, learning her habits, her particular fondness for this place? Is there, perhaps, something odd or unusual, however innocent, in his past relation to her, that will enable him now, if forced to it, to approach her, speak her name softly, and engage her in talk? Or has he, perhaps, made up his mind to stalk and kill her at any hazard whatever—to shoot her down from a distance, even? There is no knowing—as yet. Nor is there any need to know, for she comes straight to him of her own volition, all unaware. Does he then accost her? Do any words pass between them? This, too, cannot be known—until all is known.)

. . . His fingers are at her throat, remorseless as steel hooks, gripping from behind. His weight bears her down; his gripping knees smother the struggles of her body and limbs. Still he must wait for what seems an eternity of racing heart-beats and bursting blood-vessels. But at last, at last, it is—over. There is warm crimson on his hands, from her mouth, her nose. He wipes his hands on her trailing scarf, in the second before he runs reeling from the place.

(Query: has he remembered to turn his motor-car around, ready for flight? Yes, so crafty and far-sighted a villain would have included that detail. Does he, perhaps, turn the stop-cock under the radiator, to let the jet of hot water play over his murderer's hands? It occurs to Quint that he himself would do that, if he were in the same situation. Yes, the murderer is crafty enough for that, especially if there is as yet no sign of discovery or pursuit.)

He drives west slowly for some dis-

tance without turning on his lights. Then, by the dash-light, he looks once more at his watch. Still not eight: he is going to make his train, and with a little to spare. He snaps on the headlights, steps on the accelerator. . . .

VIII

QUINT, while he stood thinking this out, let pass the in-bound trolley he had meant to take. Another came rumbling down the track: by hurrying to the corner he could just make it. He continued to stand, numbly gazing at the ground with absent eyes. And when the trolley had clanked by the white post on the corner he turned the opposite way and, as if drawn magnetically without volition of his own, paced toward the clump of bushes a hundred yards or less up the road.

There, on a spot where, he dared say, a hundred spooning couples had stopped their cars on as many warm spring evenings, he found the answer to at least two of his queries. In new-springing grass and weeds by the roadside his foot kicked against a metal object, which, when he had tapped the sand and caked mud from its surface, proved to be a loaded automatic pistol, unusually long-barreled and equipped with what the detective instantly recognized as a form of Maxim silencer. Its cartridge clip was filled. And, within two feet of it, he picked up still more corroboration, in the form of an automobile radiator plug—an ordinary threaded "butterfly" plug, made of brass.

It was clear enough, then, that Byrne had forced his intention definitely up to the pitch of murder at any price short of certain discovery—murder to be executed by one means if he could not accomplish it by another. He had laid down the unused implement for a few seconds in order to wash his hands at the radiator outlet, had dropped the plug as the hot stream spurted over his fingers, and then, in pawing hysterically for it under the forward shadow of the car, had clean forgotten the pistol

for a moment and driven off without it. Quint did not envy him either the few seconds of that frantic search in the dark for a small and necessary and impishly perverse object, or the impact of his recollection when it flashed over him that he had left his pistol behind.

Oh, why had not the Hamerton crowd really done their job the next morning when they were summoned? That night had been warm and clear; doubtless the next day had been sunny. The stream from that radiator must have left its trail all the way from the initial puddle to West Avenue. The loose dirt of the road would have recorded a legible imprint of all four tires, easily extricable for several hours from the traces of what little other traffic there would have been; it would have been easy to find out what car had turned up at a service station the night before with a hot engine and an empty radiator, and to compare its tires with the prints in the road; and—as Quint phrased it to himself—there would have been almost nothing to do except go to the murderer, hand him the two objects, and say: "Here's some of your property that you left behind last night."

Well, this had been left undone, then and all these weeks; rain, wind, and growth had had their way with the direct evidence; and all that might have been accomplished at a stroke must now be done by a patient and laborious process of building one detail upon another, to the erection of a structure which, when all was done, might not convince any twelve men beyond the "reasonable doubt" which saved so many criminal lives. It was up to Quint now.

He gave over inaction with a bound and broke into a sprint when, far up the asphalt beyond Ellsworth's gate, he heard another trolley car screech round the curve of the switch.

PART 3

I

At four o'clock of the afternoon five days subsequent to Quint's visit to the

Ellsworth estate, a bare square room in the Marine Insurance Building, three blocks from Quint's office, was crammed to its single outer door with a shrill motley of women. These were as one in three several particulars. First, they bent the same look of straining expectancy on a certain ground-glass window in the rear partition of the room—a window at present closed tight and as coldly uncommunicative as a glass eye. Secondly, they were all chirping continuously, without even the most perfunctory pretence of listening, and the combined chatter was like that of a September migration of blackbirds. Finally, each carried either that morning's *Courier-Register* or else the subjoined clipping therefrom:

WANTED. A refined American girl, 26-28 years in appearance, of average height and weight, brunette, for an important special assignment. Five hundred dollars will be paid to exactly the right person for a few hours' interesting work. Apply, with this notice, at Room 707, Marine Insurance Building, this afternoon between four and five.

With the exception of these three particulars there was no traceable resemblance among those who sat in each other's laps on the wooden settees along the walls or jostled, shoved, edged, and wriggled in their efforts to close in a few inches nearer to the all-important ground-glass window. They included every degree of latitude and longitude from pigmy to giantess; they filled the scale from positive emaciation to a doughy and dropsical obesity; their complexions ranged from a rich creole to the chalkiest peroxide blonde and, actually, one incredible albino; and if their ages came to anything like the stipulated average, it was owing to several pert fledglings of sixteen, who, not being able to exceed their rivals of forty-odd in brevity of skirt, sheerness of blouse and hosiery, or thickness of paint, strove desperately to outdo them in impudence of wit and what was intended for a gay impropriety.

From their giggling comments on each other and on the occasional new arrival who pushed her way through the door from the corridor, it might have been gathered that they were each as keenly observant of the others' lack of qualifications as they were oblivious of their own lack. "Hey, cutie, did you think it said 'sixty-two to eighty-two'?"—"No, darling, this ain't the corset shop: that's two flights down."—"O my Gawd, look at that one! She never grew up: she just swelled up."—"Pipe the blonde Pavlowa; my, ain't she brittle!"—"Say, peachie, are you refined? If you are, just toddle up to the window and collect your five hundred."

The variety of comments was infinite, their tone identical. They prevented nobody who wished from hearing the gist of an endless recital which was being poured, in inordinate detail, from the lips of a seventeen-year-old flapper into the complacent ear of another flapper who sat on her lap on one of the settees. This insouciant chronicle appeared to be mostly about a girl called Mabel, who started for a dance, as her mother considered, inadequately appareled. "'You go right straight upstairs and put them on,'" the mother was reported to have directed this Mabel. "And you can bet her ma felt of her before she went out, to make sure she had them on. And when Mabel gets there, what does she do but take them off in the dressing room *and check them!*" The tale broke up into a thin froth of what *he* says and what *she* says, all fascinatingly saucy.

The ground-glass window shot up with a bang. There was a stampede toward it, and the female population of the room, which one would have said could suffer no diminution in cubic content without the destruction of life, miraculously regrouped itself in a semi-circular tumult immediately in front of the enchanted orifice, leaving three-quarters of the room entirely vacant. The grinning and care-free youth whose face had momentarily appeared answered this evolution by calmly banging the window shut again, to a chorus of

theatrically exaggerated groans, sighs, and wails. A fat woman who had got her elbows strategically planted on the window-ledge narrowly escaped being guillotined; but the crowd presently took the hint and subsided into its earlier formation. When the window was reopened, more slowly and cautiously this time, no one moved.

"Well, girls," said the youth, still grinning affably, "it's all off." (More wails and groans.) "The party's over. I just had word from the boss, and he says there's nothing doing—today, anyway. Sorry."

The chorus was all indignation, with a refrain of "Well, what do you know about that!"

"Say, young man," demanded one rather expansive siren, drawing herself up haughtily, "ain't this the ticket office of the Green Funnel Line?"

"It was last week, dearie," said the youth. "Why? did you think you were on for a free trip to the old country?"

"But don't we even get a try-out? or our expenses?" they hurled at him.

"Nothing doing today, thanks," he retorted laconically. "So long, old dears."

The window banged down again.

They stormed furiously at him through it, but, finding that this did no particular good except to relieve their feelings momentarily, adjourned in indignant groups to the elevator shaft. The sense of the meeting seemed to be that it was a hollow farce to let them down that way—not even a lecture on the latest and most expensive system of facial massage, with free introductory samples. They couldn't make it out. It seemed to be neither the occasional real thing nor the usual entertaining fake.

II

IN his office three blocks away, the anonymous and inaccessible cause of their disgruntlement, Peter S. Quint, Investigator, known to a few comparative intimates as "Squint," sat waiting impatiently for his client, Ellsworth.

The morning before, Quint had settled on a plan of campaign, the ultimate result of which, he frankly admitted to himself, must be either Byrne's explicit confession of guilt or—absolute failure. Ellsworth had personally delivered to him a bundle containing all the available likenesses of his late fiancée, Miss Landys. They ranged all the way from kodak snapshots in a variety of costumes, through conventional cabinet photographs and elaborate art-photograph studies, to a small portrait in pastels done by Yarnell; and they provided glimpses of the subject from her schoolgirlhood to a few weeks before her death. Quint had asked that they be confided to him for a few days, with no questions asked. Ellsworth had asked none, and Quint had volunteered no information.

Once he had said:

"Can you let some friends of mine have the free run of your place—the part of it south of the house—some afternoon next week, if I give you notice? They will know nothing about all this, and I guarantee that they will be no bother."

To this, Ellsworth had assented.

Quint had spent several hours studying the collection of photographs. He studied them until he felt that he had extricated their meaning—not merely the look and characteristic poses of Margaret Landys, but the trick of her personality, unconsciously betrayed as personality is in every look and gesture by a young woman, gently reared, who, without boldness or self-assertiveness, is in all things the soul of candor. And when Quint felt that he had come to understand the unity underlying her diversity—both the unity and the diversity being, he thought, adorable—he hired the office lately vacated by a travel agency, put it in charge of Augustus Leverett, an intelligent young college undergraduate who sometimes helped him run down mechanical odds and ends of information in his spare time, and composed the advertisement for the morning *Courier-Register*. He was going into the market, on his client's

behalf, for the temporary services of that very remarkable and perhaps non-existent person, a young woman who could not only be made, by arts of make-up and perspective, to look like Margaret Landys, but who had also the brains or the intuition to grasp the subtle essence of the murdered girl's temperament as Quint thought he himself grasped it, and so to *act* like her. On the result of this quest—and he recognized that it might be interminable—hinged the whole success of his strategy so far as he had evolved it.

At the instant of sweeping the assortment of pictures together to put them into his safe—it was ten minutes of four, and he was rushing off to his appointment at the Marine Insurance Building—Quint's eye was arrested by a detail which, in his absorption with the fact itself, he had hardly noticed before. He turned the particular photograph over, to find penned on its back the words, “—and Ruth, October 17, 1910.”

Feeling his action a little ridiculous, he called Ellsworth's office, gave his name, and was connected with his client.

“I want to know, if you don't mind,” he said, “about this photograph that has been cut in two—the one that says ‘and Ruth’ on the back of it.”

There was, he thought, a suspicion of constraint in the answering voice. “Why, there was a sister, Ruth. This was the last time they were ever taken together, because—they haven't seen Ruth for years. This was cut off for me by Mrs. Landys. She has the other. I don't think I could have told the two faces apart myself—so long ago, you see. They were twins.”

The flat of Quint's hand came down on the desk with a tremendous thump.

“Oh, I beg your pardon,” he said. “But—Great God, man, why didn't you tell me this before?”

“Why, does it matter? I—I—”

“Oh, well, never mind. Is the sister living?”

“Yes.”

“Is she where—would it be possible,

in a dire emergency, to communicate with her, see her?”

“I—think so. I can find out.”

Pause. “Can you get over to my office, right away?”

“If you really need me—yes.”

“Then come.”

He hung up, and immediately scrawled a note to Leverett, waiting in the Marine Insurance Building, directing him to dismiss the applicants forthwith and close the office.

III

DURING the days just past, Quint had done, or had had done for him by Leverett, a considerable number of odds and ends of routine work on the Landys case, the results of which now lay tabulated before him in a concise list of memoranda. He had looked up the registration numbers of the three Byrne-Winthrop cars in the latest automobile directory. One of the three, a small coupé, appeared on the books of a garage two blocks from the city's union station as having stayed there from the night of April 16 to the morning of April 18. Leverett, by hanging about the garage and asking off-hand questions, finally located the employe who had parked the car in the garage on the evening of the sixteenth. No, it had been, not Mr. Byrne himself who drove it in, but a man who operated a public-service car which was usually hanging about the station to meet trains. Mr. Byrne, evidently short of time, had turned his car over to this fellow at the station, engaging him to leave it at the garage. The garage employe remembered the particular occasion because of this circumstance, for Mr. Byrne, when he was going to New York alone, often personally drove his car into the garage, meaning to pick it up when he landed from the train on coming back. No, the car had not come in with an empty radiator: but that was thanks to the public-service driver, who, discovering that the engine was over-heating, had whittled out a wooden plug to jam into the drain-pipe outlet and had then filled the radi-

ator at a fountain. The employe distinctly recalled the driver's grumbling about the unreasonableness of a "guy" who, after handing a car over with its radiator empty, would be sure to blame the hired driver if it turned up later with a ruined engine.

It was Quint himself who found out from Ellsworth's head gardener how the side gate had happened to be unlocked. The men of the construction gang had been allowed to take their drinking water in pails from a silcock on the south lawn; the gardener himself had opened the disused gate in order to shorten their walk, and also to keep them from trampling the grass near the main entrance.

It was also Quint who, by making discreet inquiries at the office of the Davenport & Lowell Company, identified and talked with the clerk who had had charge of the payroll and the telephone booth during the construction work. This factotum, a hopelessly bored and indifferent elderly man, could indeed remember that, on coming to work one morning, he had found the telephone shanty broken into. No, he could not say on exactly what date—near the middle of April, he thought. He had had a stronger fastening put on, and thought no more of it. Nothing of value was ever left there, anyway. Yes, the telephone had been used several times, during working hours, by outsiders. A passerby would notice him telephoning and ask to use the instrument for a call; there was no reason why he should not oblige, especially if the line were comparatively idle. No, he could not remember any of these outsiders specifically. Quint felt sure enough that Byrne had been one of them—that he had trumped up a call expressly to make sure in advance that the line connected with the city's general telephone service and not simply with the contractor's office. If this were so, it constituted one more link in the chain of evidence which proved the cold-blooded and cautious deliberation with which the crime had been contrived.

Quint had often had occasion to

swear at, but never before a reason to bless, the innate sluggishness of public utilities concerns. If the local telephone company had not been shorthanded, that particular telephone would have been disconnected at least a month before, Davenport & Lowell would have lugged their shanty off to some other job, even the square on which it stood would now be freshly overgrown, and—the strongest link in a rather impressive chain would be entirely missing.

IV

ABSOLUTE failure, on the other hand, attended the efforts of Quint and his assistant to run down the local source, if it existed, of the brand of cigarettes called "Nepenthe." One dealer after another looked blank, shook his head, searched perfunctorily through printed price lists, and gave it up. Quint, in obedience to a fancy of his own which logic perhaps failed to justify, clipped off the paper of the stub which he had preserved, spread it out flat, and took it, with a supply of blank cigarette papers, to a stationer who consented, for a rush-order price, to turn out a supply of sufficiently good duplicates. Quint then had these duplicates to the number of a hundred filled with excellent Egyptian at a Syrian cigarette-maker's establishment on Grand Avenue; as a result of which expedient he now had in his Clayton Street apartment, neatly stowed in a silver cigarette chest, a hundred ostensible Nepenthes.

It was no time at all before he was glad he had taken this precaution. For, on the third evening, after three days of intermittent efforts to get an identifying glimpse of Joel Byrne and see what manner of man he had to deal with, he found himself offering the open cigarette chest to Joel Byrne himself, as a prelude to dining with him in this same apartment in Clayton Street.

It came about in a very simple way. After six hours of absolute discouragement, during which he almost began to doubt if any such person existed, he realized that he was getting seedy and

dejected; and he philosophically gave up work for the rest of the day and trolleyed out to the Country Club—an indulgence to which he had treated himself rarely of late. Three men, all of whom he had often seen on the links and one of whom he knew slightly, were idling about at the first tee, obviously waiting for a delinquent fourth man. In almost less time than it takes for the telling, Quint heard himself called over by his acquaintance, committed to a foursome, and introduced to the other two men—the younger of whom was “Byrne” for purposes of formality, and otherwise merely “Joel,” according to the idiom of their easy-going set.

Quint’s first reaction was one of acute astonishment. Byrne was physically slight, almost frail. Not above five feet six, he could hardly have weighed a hundred and thirty-five pounds. His face, quick and keen, with restless and discontented eyes, was the ascetic face of a cynical thinker who has seen through everything, even himself, and outlived his belief in everything, even thinking. His age, Quint guessed, was thirty-eight or forty. He had dark brown hair, straight and very short, parted in the middle, and a dapper moustache, also close-cropped.

His participation in a crime of violence, once Quint had seen him, was inordinately difficult to visualize; and as the detective watched him in action it became more and more difficult, even fantastic, until Quint, if he had let his thoughts go, could well-nigh have screamed with insane laughter at the notion that the sum of his patiently sought clues and inspired deductions should have amounted to nothing more than this nervous eccentric, this odd and negligible trifle of male effeminacy. Another instance of the mountain’s travail to bring forth a mouse!

Prolonged observation began to undermine this initial impression and to reverse the growth of the detective’s involuntary contempt. For one thing, Byrne played an astonishing game, of no great length or power, to be sure, but of a hair-trigger accuracy in short

approaches and on the greens. As one hole succeeded another, Quint found himself yielding, still involuntarily, to the sense of what, considering the physical limitations involved, was really a superb exhibition, leading, too, to a decidedly enviable score.

“What an eye the fellow has!” he caught himself reflecting. “And—what wrists!”

Somehow, it ceased to be quite so absurd to imagine the fingers controlled by those wrists as closing with inexorably murderous intent on the soft whiteness of a woman’s throat, never to unlock themselves until the warm current of life had slipped out through a clutch too remorseless for the breath of life to find its way in.

The other two players, both elderly business men, grumpy at finding themselves sadly off their game, made common excuse at the ninth hole and left Quint and Byrne to play out the round together. Byrne, who had hitherto been taciturn, thereupon became talkative; and gradually Quint realized that in spite of himself he was being interested, not to say fascinated.

Byrne seemed to have been one of those detached and leisurely globe-trotters who have gone everywhere, done everything, and maintained throughout an amusedly tolerant skepticism, an inscrutable curiosity. He talked about himself a great deal, but impersonally, as if he were speaking of someone else in whom he was frankly interested. When he launched into a humorous tirade against the desperate badness of most American cooking, coupled with extravagant eulogies of Oriental food, it became wholly natural for Quint to invite him, with an air of sudden inspiration, to dine very informally at Clayton Street and sample the culinary virtuosity of Quint’s excellent Japanese servant.

Byrne accepted with enthusiasm; and after the two had had their showers, dressed, and telephoned—Quint to his servant about the dinner, Byrne to his home—the detective found himself being driven cityward beside his guest,

in, as he realized all at once, the very coupé which had so creditably played its part in helping the murderer establish an impressive alibi on that April night of seven weeks before.

V

EVEN before they sat down at the table, each of two odd occurrences, in themselves trifling, closed once more the electric circuit between Quint's professional curiosity and its object. At a well-stocked cellarette in the combination library, music-room, and lounge, outdoing himself in the preparation of two very ornate cocktails, he found that all his strength would not suffice to turn the screwed-on top of an old-fashioned lightning jar of home-preserved brandied cherries. He struggled irritably with the thing, his face screwed into a grimace of concentration; then he called to the servant. Byrne, noticing, stepped quietly over, took the jar into his own left hand, and stood for an instant passively regarding it. Then, like whipcords, the tendons of his right hand and arm tightened, and a sort of instantaneous and focused explosion of muscular energy started the frozen cover from its seat. It was, because of its apparent effortlessness, an amazing feat. Quint's eyes burned with a momentary gleam as, once more, he thrilled to the latent ferocity of strength buried in those hands and wrists.

"When it's fingers you want, always try a pianist and save time," remarked Byrne laconically.

"So!" said Quint. "I hadn't known. Perhaps you'll show me, after dinner." He nodded toward the open grand piano across the room. "I'm only a strummer myself, but the instrument's a good one, and in good shape."

The second occurrence, even more astonishing in its purport and incalculably more baffling, came a moment later when, accepting with his cocktail a cigarette from the silver chest, Byrne caught sight of the fine blue tracery of script on its paper. Quint was alert for the least suppressed hint

of betraying emotion; but he was not in the least braced against the unsuppressed demonstration which ensued, Byrne's face was ashen and sick. He set down his cocktail glass on the mantel and drew a deep, gasping breath.

"Good God!" he ejaculated. "You smoke—*those*?" His gesture was expressive of a strong revulsion.

Quint could only stare blankly.

"Why—they have just been sent to me," he stammered. "As a matter of fact I haven't tried them yet. They certainly cost me enough to be good."

"And you know nothing about them?" his guest persisted with a quiet and rather enigmatic intensity.

"Nothing very—extraordinary. Just what do you mean?"

"Mr. Quint," said his guest, still with the same strange fixity, "I don't know where you got these, or from whom. But I wish, for your own sake, I could prevail upon you to let them severely alone and to forget that they exist. They are an experience which, I can assure you, sir, is better foregone—and that is perhaps a queer remark from a person whose sole ambition in life is the accumulation of experiences."

He smiled sourly, still looking sick and shaken; but his eyes still held Quint's, and the younger man's were the first to drop.

"It shall certainly be as you suggest," said Quint, with a recovery of lightness, "and for no reason on earth except that you suggest it—for I can't in the least pretend to understand you."

And, with a slight shrug, he turned to the cabinet by the cellarette for other and more orthodox things to smoke.

VI

THE wildly active speculations roused by these two episodes merged into a quite different set of emotions when, after a dinner of which the guest said lightly, "*This*, my dear fellow, is the one true and authentic Flower of Old Japan," Byrne sat down at the piano, in the dimness of a large room pre-

vailingly blue-black in tone, lighted only by one deep blue-silk-shaded lamp and a dancing fire which Quint had touched off to remove the suspicion of chill. Byrne's playing was magical. The things he played ran almost exclusively to the eerie and the bizarre, and even when they did not he somehow contrived to give them a leering and diabolical accent. His entire performance at the keyboard suggested that music was, to him, the one untrammelled outlet of a diabolism fundamental and ingrained.

Quint was at first inclined to say that he was in the presence of a man whom only music, and perhaps only a particular unearthly kind of music, made fully alive. Yet that was not quite it: for through all his playing there ran an element which was the negation of life; which was a thousand times more cold, more aloof, more skeptical and mocking and sardonic than anything he would ever normally disclose; which was, in fine, more deathly. His aliveness was that of a frozen imp; it was an aliveness, somehow, of instinctive calculating cruelty, beautiful as a basilisk would be beautiful, subtly modulated as the curves of a snake's body. And the kinship of this lethal cruelty was not so much with life as with—death. Quint's thought kept coming back to that. Yes, that was it. The dance of Byrne's fingers over the rank of ivory keys was a dance of devils, of glittering dead eyes in firelight, of monstrous writhing shapes at a Walpurgis Night orgy—a dance of death. . . . Such was the net resultant impression as Byrne slipped from an almost unplayable sonata of Liszt to his own improvisation on a theme of Berlioz, and thence to bizarre snatches of neo-impressionism by Ravel, Scriabine, Schönberg. Here, if anywhere, was a soul self-dedicated to the lethal principle—a human being who was most fully alive when most coldly engaged in venting the instinct of torture, expressing his hatred and contempt of life in insults of an exquisite super-refinement.

To the watching listener in the dusk of the blue-black room there came again and again, as Byrne's claw-like hands hung poised, ready for their inerrant eagle's swoop upon a thunderously jangling chord, the grotesque illusion that the other was some strange male harpy, devising unheard-of tortures—tortures which at the same time were contemptuous and malignant caresses—for a beautiful and helpless white body outstretched before him and dumbly pleading for mercy where there was no mercy to be had. About the whole exhibition there was an aura of something actually, if not definably, indecent with the indecency of perversion. The inhumanity, Quint surmised, of the human creature over-civilized! He had a vaguely uncomfortable, grimly humorous notion that he ought to be telephoning for the police.

It was, altogether, a strange evening. Its strangeness was still upon him when Byrne, concluding with the well-known *Cantique d'Amour* of Liszt, which he played with a blasé and mocking condescension, as if he thought it inconceivably quaint, relapsed all at once into the rather sleepy urbanity of his ordinary manner and said his good night, with renewed compliments to the dinner, the pianoforte, and his host.

"You think my playing is rather too full of ghosts," he remarked lightly, in going.

"Ghosts—or devils," returned Quint drily.

"Oh, ghosts, I assure you. Yes, yes, I believe in them perfectly. If you had *seen* them, as I have—! or, at least, I've seen one of them several times over, which is a fair mathematical equivalent of seeing several of them one time apiece. Not longer ago than yesterday, for instance—. They are fully as real, my dear young man, as you are. Why, who but a ghost stocked that cigarette chest of yours? Oh, smile! but one of these days—! . . . Well, so long."

From midway of the stairs he flourished a hand over his shoulder, but without looking back.

VII

QUINT, after this encounter, was bogged in a state common to imaginative persons after some profoundly unsettling experience—a state marked by fits of distrust as to the worth of what he was doing, revulsion from the attempt to do it, a sense of the complete unreality of his ordinary preoccupations, and a profound skepticism as to the claims of action generally. Ellsworth, with whom he had at first achieved an almost fraternal sympathy, was now like a stranger, an almost meaningless passerby; and the details of his own investigation had become as the rote processes of some algebraic formula are to a schoolboy who understands nothing about them except that they must be learned.

Quint went on doggedly with his schemes, but without the zest of his former excitement. His adventure in detection he accepted, of course, professionally, as a duty to be gone through; but he could no longer pretend that the affair held for him any motive comparable to the burning and morbid curiosity with which he longed to penetrate to the core of Joel Byrne's identity, plumb the man's motives and psychology, and ultimately comprehend what manner of being he was.

As for the trap he was himself laying, it had come to seem to him a shallow and rather tawdry piece of theatrical chicanery. He cursed himself for this indifference; he knew that he should ignore it in act, and not succumb to his emotional lethargy; he knew, too, that he was never going to betray to his client, by look or gesture, the extent to which he was being fascinated by the crime itself, considered as a challenging revelation of the criminal's personality. Quint was secure enough in the practical discipline of his craft; yet, even while he sat waiting for Ellsworth to appear and elucidate this strange new complication of the twin sister, he could not prevent his thoughts from straggling

off to the evening on which he had met Byrne—to the queerness of Byrne's agitation and the still greater queerness of his inhuman poise.

VIII

WHEN Ellsworth arrived and began to answer the rapid-fire of questions, Quint was able to verify his impression of his client's constraint and discomfort. The story of Ruth Landys, not in itself an unprecedented disaster, was obviously such a family tragedy as a man of Ellsworth's stamp could not speak of without embarrassment and pain.

The twins, Margaret and Ruth, it transpired, had been together at a fashionable boarding-school on the Hudson. Both of them were, among other things, keen and daring gymnasts. One day while they were doing unofficial stunts in the school gymnasium, Ruth had fallen from a swinging trapeze. When, after thirty-six hours of unconsciousness, she had come to herself, it seemed as if she were destined to emerge from the experience without the slightest impairment of either mind or body. But slowly, at first imperceptibly, as she got over the bodily effects of the blow, it began to appear that there was a curious twist in her brain—in, as it might be put, her character.

In temperament and tastes the two girls had been as twins proverbially are—well-nigh identical. But now, without any compensating change in Margaret, they began to seem diametrically opposed. The only change in Margaret was that she now shrank in ungovernable revulsion from the gymnasium. Ruth, on the other hand, was a thousand times more dare-devil than before, more avid of risk, and more determined to attempt and perform the seemingly impossible. Excitement became almost a mania with her, danger a fascination and an obsession. At the same time she reacted violently against Margaret's quiet tastes in dress and behavior, in books, music, friends. She

went in for violent color, glaring contrasts, unrestraint, mad and defiant escapades. Worst and most tragic of all, she seemed to regard her sister with an unreasoning suppressed fury; and when Mrs. Landys came to the school to visit her two daughters, Ruth would disappear for hours and could not be found.

Inevitably, as the upshot of one of her mad exploits, Ruth was dismissed from the school. Margaret was broken-hearted, Ruth merely flippant in her unrelaxed defiance. Mrs. Landys was to come the next day, to take her daughters home—for Margaret could not abide the thought of staying on in a place which suggestion and memory would have turned so unbearably dismal. But when the mother came, there was but one of her daughters there to receive her. Ruth had run away the night before.

It was three years before they saw or heard of her again. Then, in a distant state, she was encountered, by pure chance, by a younger brother of Mrs. Landys. She was, of all things, a professional acrobat, doing hair-raising stunts with a traveling circus. She had made no special effort to evade their inquiries, beyond changing her last name from "Landys" to "Landis"; but she had absolutely refused to communicate with her people, to receive them, or to let her chosen way of life be modified by their wishes. She accepted, though indifferently and as one granting a favor, the small sums of money which from time to time her mother insisted on sending to her through the agency with which she was registered. She made no other concession, then or thereafter. For all Ellsworth knew to the contrary, her relation to her family still remained unchanged. It was possible, he thought, that Mrs. Landys knew more about Ruth than she had ever confided to her other daughter. As for himself, he knew no more than Margaret had insisted on his knowing, as her fiancé and as the future brother-in-law of the capricious and errant girl who had so mysteriously

been turned into an incomprehensible stranger by a knock on the head.

Quint and Ellsworth discussed, cursorily, the chance that such a warping of character might be counteracted by some one of the niceties of modern occipital surgery. But, as Ellsworth pointed out, there was no evidence that Ruth *wanted* to be other than she was; she was of age, subject to no compulsion in such a matter; and, as he understood it, no one could honestly declare that she was insane, in the sense of being incapable of managing her own affairs rationally, even shrewdly. Hopelessly and irrevocably, she had become a quite different person. That was all there was to it: the less said and thought on the subject, the better.

"But, my dear Ellsworth," said Quint finally, "don't you see the terrific, the really overwhelming possible connection of all this with what we are trying to do?"

Ellsworth stared back at his questioner, a little vacantly. Then comprehension dawned in his eyes, lighting them to a sudden excitement.

"You mean—?" he began eagerly.

"I mean," said the detective steadily, with grimness in the line of his jaw, "that the man who killed Margaret Landys was in all probability himself the victim of an accident. I mean that he had probably never heard of her existence; that he thought he was killing *Ruth* Landys, her identical twin; that he may have had what seemed to him the most conclusive of reasons for wishing to kill her—though God alone knows what those reasons could have been. So the question for me is, How soon can you find Ruth Landys for me, and can you make it possible for me to see and talk with her? For—I may as well tell you—I am working on a plan which needs only what she can do by way of completing it, to bring this whole thing to light and see the most absolute justice done."

PART 4

I

FOR the second time within a week,

events played into Quint's hands. Mrs. Landys, who was coming more and more, despite all manner of tragic associations, to lean upon the man who was to have been her son-in-law, and also upon her friend, his invalid mother, was due within three days on a long visit to the Ellsworths. Ellsworth himself anticipated this reunion by taking the first possible train for Wilmington, intending simply to stay at the Landys house there for two days and then accompany Mrs. Landys on her trip to his home.

On the morning before he was due to return, Quint received a note from him, written at the Landys house. It brought the information that Ruth "Landis," as she now invariably spelled herself, was always accessible through a large New York theatrical agency, and that Ellsworth and Mrs. Landys, instead of entrusting their inquiries to the mail, would personally stop at the agency on their way back the next day and find out Miss Landis's present whereabouts, letting it be supposed that they wished to communicate with her on professional business.

The result of this inquiry, when it came in the form of an unexpected personal call from Ellsworth at Quint's apartment the following evening, made the detective's heart pound. For it appeared that Ruth Landis was at that very day, hour, and minute all but in their own city of East Framstead, and quite probably within three or four miles of the room in which they paced excitedly up and down talking about her. During the interval in which Quint had been bracing himself in preparation for the weary business of ransacking the continent for her should it prove necessary, she had been where, for all he knew, he had seen her a dozen times.

Saltonstall, the most daring and extravagant innovator among latter-day motion-picture producers, was to thank for this stroke of luck. In the course of filming one of his huge spectacles, a historical-romantic melodrama that was to set a new record in cost, number of

performers, scenic magnificence, and overwhelming variety of episode, he had put Ruth Landis in the way of her first big opportunity. Learning through her agency of her combination of physical hardihood, cool recklessness, and altogether uncommon beauty, he had enticed her away from her beloved circus, at a flatteringly padded salary, to play her part in two of the sensational thrills of his new production.

The first of these episodes, a marine exploit which involved a ship wrecked off-shore in a storm and a subsequent swim through a narrow tide-rip to what was ostensibly a deserted shore, had been successfully recorded earlier in the spring, after much waiting for wind, weather, and light and several unsuccessful experiments, at a bleak and forlorn section of the coast near East Framstead, some six or seven miles down the bay. The second such episode, now being prepared at a location north of the city in a park reservation of natural scenery, called for a perilous bit of riding athwart steep boulder-strewn slopes, followed by a desperate plunge into a river at the bottom of a sheer and narrowing gorge, whence the swimmer's only escape was through a stretch of rapids sucking powerfully toward the thunder of a tremendous fall.

Both feats were exactly expressive of the kind of dash and verve in which Ruth Landis was conceded to excel. Probably of but mediocre and undeveloped ability as a creative actress, she had an unrealized fortune in her bodily prowess and imperturbable zest for danger—qualities which the astute Saltonstall was the first to exploit anything like commensurately with their potential appeal to the larger and more humdrum public which seeks its thrills elsewhere than in the tents of an itinerant circus.

As to the personal characteristics of that nationally conspicuous figure, Bertrand Saltonstall, reports differed flatly. He was variously pictured as the most aloof and inaccessible of mortals and as the most approachable and benevo-

lent of impresarios, with a helping hand outstretched to everybody and a miraculous amount of spare time to frivol away on any crack-brained enthusiast who fancied he had an interesting idea. Quint, not to run any risk of being left high and dry at the end of a faulty approach, took the trouble to make himself known to a local friend of the great man and to armor himself with credentials and letters of introduction which, if Saltonstall had been living in the White House, would have been good for a week-end on the Presidential yacht *Mayflower*.

II

So equipped, and with an appointment arranged by telephone, he appeared one morning at the suburban studios, where Saltonstall had his office in a dilapidated wood-house belonging to the disused farm which was the nucleus of the present location. Feeling his way, Quint tried for a few minutes to manufacture polite general conversation; whereupon Saltonstall, restive and bored, said: "Well, Mr. Quint, I take it you haven't come to me, at this hour, for afternoon tea, exactly?" Only then was Quint sure that they were going to understand each other.

He set forth his general idea and his requirements with unreserved frankness, asking only that they be kept confidential. The other nodded his careless acceptance of this condition. Quint began to understand how this captain-general of a new industry, an Olympian personage ready to commit himself for or against million-dollar projects on the basis of inspired snap-judgments reached after a few minutes' discussion, had so completely captured the popular imagination, taking rank in it as an almost legendary figure in the grand tradition. From fearing lest he seem to Saltonstall to want unreasonably and presumptuously much, he began to suspect that he was not demanding enough to stir the promoter's faintest interest.

Suddenly, at a remark of Quint's, the Olympian began to chuckle.

"So you want a general idea of what all this is going to cost your millionaire client, eh?" he said. "Why, my dear innocent young man, if you had the smallest degree of practical insight into the particular go of this game of ours, you would be inviting me to hand you out a small fortune for the picture rights of this novel idea of yours. If I understand you correctly, you are proposing to catch a criminal by filming his crime as you imagine it to have been committed, and then getting him to attend the performance. That's the thing in a nutshell, isn't it? Well, don't you—" he jumped to his feet—"don't you see that there you have the big scene of a brand-new stunt in photoplays? Why, it's the murder yarn of the century!"

This was an entirely new angle of consideration, so far as Quint was concerned.

"Is there any literary property in such an idea as that?" he asked doubtfully. "I seem to remember something of the kind in *Hamlet*—'The play's the thing,' and all that, you know."

"*Hamlet* be blowed! It's never been *pictured*, don't you see? And the conceit of using the movie itself as a mechanical detective—my dear boy, you've simply missed your vocation. If you care to say you'll let me have the idea—and I honestly don't think you'll find anyone who'll do better by it, or by you—I'll have a reliable scenario-writer churning on it by the end of the week. If you're too busy to think about it just at present, you can help yourself to what you want of my staff now—simply as a sort of advance royalty, you see—and we'll come to terms later. Talk it over with some discreet friend, your lawyer, anybody you like—only for the love of Pete don't peddle the idea round where it'll get away from you!"

To tell the exact truth, Quint was rather disconcerted than flattered by this droll outcome of his strategy. It only went to illustrate the ancient truism that what is important to one man is a negligible trifle to another. The most important thing in Quint's

world at present was to prove, by a technical method which he rather thought amounted to the adaptation of a brand-new tool to the science of criminology, that a certain man had killed a certain woman at a specified place and time, for decipherable, though obscure, motives.

With a grim fixity of purpose he had gone about the complex task of assembling the details and resources necessary to his demonstration—only to find them tossed carelessly into his lap by a man who obviously did not value his tragic mystery at the worth of a brass penny, who had no sense of its reality, and who lent his assistance to its solution in a perfunctory and indifferent spirit, treating it as a negligible side-issue of something that Quint had not so much as thought of at all.

It was slightly annoying to Quint's own dignity, slightly belittling to the whole emotional background of the Ellsworth-Landys tragedy. Here was himself, locked in a struggle with the profoundest realities of death and fate; and there, sitting calmly in the chair facing him, was Saltonstall, planning to turn his struggle into a scene for giving forty minutes' amusement to hordes of careless and meaningless people whom neither of them would ever see, and saying absently, as he rolled the idea under his tongue:

"And you say that all this actually happened? How very interesting!" No, Quint confessed to himself that he couldn't altogether like it.

Still, the main point was that, thanks to Saltonstall's participation, the detective was placed at a stroke in command of all that he had expected to win by argument, cajolery, pleading, and eventually by paying rather handsomely, out of Ellsworth's capacious pocket. For this, of course, he was more than grateful. If his smile were ever so faintly rueful as he thrust aside the less material considerations, Bertrand Saltonstall was, happily, not the person to notice that, or to mind if he did notice.

III

To initiate an enterprise with Saltonstall, Quint discovered, was to find oneself at a bound in the thick of its implications. The detective had expected to spend hours, perhaps days, in studying Ruth Landis from a distance, devising exactly the right approach to take advantage of whatever susceptibilities she had, and preparing the way for her compliance. Saltonstall merely touched a button, said: "Ask Miss Landis to step over here for a minute, please," introduced the two, concluded by saying, "I want you to do whatever you possibly can for Mr. Quint, Miss Landis; he will tell you just what he wants," and waved them away.

Quint was dazed and blinking with the bright suddenness of the whole transaction. It gave him—and not for the first time, either—a sense of how insidiously the devious traditional methods and professional circumspection of his own trade had been undermining the directness and ingenuousness of even so forthright a person as he himself naturally was. How often he had ridiculed the circuitousness and elaborate mystifications of the typical detective of romantic fiction! Yet here was he, preparing to behave exactly like them, and shown the superiority of simple and downright frankness by members of a profession which, since it made its living by neither more nor less than conscious pretending, might be supposed to rank as about the least candid in existence.

Miss Landis, a beautiful enigma to him at the first meeting of their eyes, remained both beautiful and inscrutable as, together, they stepped out into the June sunshine along a grass-grown path toward what had once been the farmhouse. For the first vivid instant Quint fancied himself in the living presence of the girl whose personality his synthetic imagination had reconstructed from Ellsworth's account and from the many likenesses on his own desk. Then he saw that this first impression had been only an illusion based on physical

identity. Here was a personality which, if not positively antipathetic to that of the dead Margaret Landys, was at any rate in violent contrast to it. "Smouldering" was the adjective that popped into his mind; whereas he would have said that Margaret had been sunny all through, like the transparency of this cool June day. The girl at his side had an imperturbable and cool exterior, but under it she was all banked fires. He could imagine these as raging inwardly and, under the draught of some terrible outer excitement, as flaring forth in ungovernable passions, fierce desires and impulses; perhaps in strange and cruel malignities.

In a flash his thought reverted to Joel Byrne. Yes, there was an occult sort of resemblance between these two. Strange, then, that one of them was about to be used as a passive and unconscious instrument for the betrayal of the other! What queer secret relation had there been between them, that had made one of them coldly dedicate his whole being to the murder of the other?—for now Quint felt, with a certainty that he could not have resisted, that he was in the presence of the intended victim of that implacable fury of Byrne's.

In a pause between the preliminary commonplaces, during which Quint was conscious of embarrassed awkwardness, he played with the extravagant fancy that, if he should suddenly strike this woman a violent blow on the head, it would restore her to the balance of qualities which she had lost by a similar blow on the head some ten years before. Perhaps she would then be indistinguishable from the woman whom Ellsworth had loved and lost; perhaps she would be, in effect, Margaret Landys, and Ellsworth would adore her as single-mindedly as he had adored her sister. . . . Ah, no! In real life these things could not be. They were too appropriate, too just, too romantic and poetic in their fitness. There were subtle modulations in Ruth Landis's face, an untamable roving light in her eye, that were the work of these ten years which

nothing could ever cancel, even if the memory of them could be effaced. On both the dead sister and the living, the ten years had written, however differently, their records. That was the essential fact: that Ruth Landis was now incurably what she had been made—whether by combined heritage of all her ancestors or by a chance pressure at a certain tiny point on her brain made no practical difference to her present fate.

And she was, after all, superb in her way. Was he quite sure that he would have wished her to be different? If she radiated haunting suggestions of the sinister, that only made her identity the more vivid, as the floating smoke-particles of a great fire might increase the splendor of the sunset. Of one fact he was tolerably sure: Margaret Landys could never have pretended to be Margaret Landys if she had happened to be somebody else. It would take Ruth Landis to do that.

IV

"WELL, Miss Landis," he began, "I may as well make a long story short by telling you that I have come to see you about—your sister. About—her death."

She flashed him a look at once startled and curious, and accepted his statement without comment.

"You know how she was killed, and that it was practically on the eve of her marriage to a Mr. Norman Ellsworth?"

"I know," she answered calmly, "what was in the Framstead papers."

Quint nodded. "Well, I am trying, on Mr. Ellsworth's behalf, to get to the bottom of the affair. The police, it seems, have failed and practically given up. Now, I have my finger on the man who committed this crime. I have him identified, beyond the shadow of a question, so far as my own mind is concerned."

Her eyes dilated suddenly.

"Then just where," she asked mildly, "do I come in?"

"Well, it's all not nearly so simple as it sounds. The evidence which makes me personally satisfied is too flimsy,

technically and legally, to ensure a conviction, or even, in the circumstances, to warrant a charge—especially as the murderer happens to be a socially prominent person here, and, indeed, a friend of the Ellsworths. Moreover, the whole matter of any possible motive is a hopeless blank. There seems to be no more sense to this murder than if I, for instance, had come here this morning and shot Mr. Saltonstall, whom I never saw before. Or rather, there is no sense to it *except on one theory.*”

“Which is—?” she challenged him evenly.

“—which is, that the murderer supposed himself to be killing quite another person—frankly, yourself.”

She drew a deep breath.

“And is this socially prominent murderer someone I am supposed to be acquainted with?” she asked coldly.

“I don’t know,” confessed Quint. Moreover, I have no thought of either telling you who he is or asking you to tell me anything you don’t feel prompted to.”

“I certainly feel prompted to tell you,” she answered, again coldly, “that I know of no one who would have any motive whatever for wishing me dead. But what *do* you want of me, then?”

“I want a few minutes of your professional services as an actress—just that, and nothing more.”

And he hurried on, explaining in rapid sentences his scheme for surprising the murderer into an explicit confession by exhibiting before him on the screen, without warning, a realistically acted version of his crime, in which she, Ruth Landis, was to play the part of her murdered sister.

She considered for a moment, frowning and biting her lip.

“Why, yes,” she assented. “I see no reason why I shouldn’t do what you want, since Mr. Saltonstall appears to want it, too. But—”

He stood attentive, eager to hear and explain away her objection, whatever it was; but, after all, she broke short off and left it unexpressed.

It was evident that she was a more

than ordinarily laconic person; she made Quint himself feel positively garrulous. He had had the idea, which he now recognized as a sentimental absurdity in connection with her, that he might be able to appeal to her softer nature, her memory, her former love of her sister. He had thought she might co-operate with his present scheme as an act of restitution and of dedication, not to speak of the sentiment of simple family loyalty.

Sadly, he now admitted that one might as well expect to argue tears into the eyes of a beautiful marble statue. He sighed, accepted this sphinx-like person for what she was, and braced his will to the sensible policy of letting well enough alone. If, buried under suffocating layers of acquired indifference, there existed a subconscious stratum of tenderness for the past, perhaps the outcome would reveal it. At all events, *he* could do nothing. He had never met anyone who so gave him the sense of being beyond all human reach. Even Byrne seemed to him, at that moment, comparatively real, credible, and warm-blooded.

The more he stared at the chilling beauty of the mask which was this woman’s face, the less he could believe in her actuality. He would have thought her a trick of his own eyes, a figment of his own brain, had he ever been given any reason to suppose his eyes and brain capable of evolving anything remotely like her.

V

THE problem of producing his murder scenario turned out to involve more fussy detail than Quint, in his innocence, had foreseen. He had naïvely thought that the task of getting any given motion picture taken, granted the conception, the setting, and the personæ, would be analogous to hiring a public stenographer to go out and take pictures of a public building, the scene of an accident, or the result of an engineering feat. Instead, even after Saltonstall had supplied him with an excellent camera man and two reliable actors for the parts of

Ellsworth and Byrne, he found that his worries were but just beginning. There had to be rehearsal after rehearsal in a secluded corner of Saltonstall's location, before the superficial action of the grim scene was nearly ready for the camera; then there were two final rehearsals on the actual scene, before each of which Quint had to make such arrangements with Ellsworth as would result in keeping the naturally curious domestics and gardeners out of sight and, more important, in eliminating the possibility of a sudden rencontre between Ruth Landis and her mother, who was still Ellsworth's guest.

The difficulties were further increased by the necessity of compelling the two male actors to work without models, so that they had to construct their rôles from Quint's oral criticism and suggestion; for it was an integral part of his design to vest all the power of his circumstantial realism in the scene, the action, and the identity of the victim, leaving the identity of the murderer as a coat to be put on by the man whom it fitted. He did not want a photographic likeness of Byrne, as he did of Margaret Landys: his whole idea was, rather, to stake all on procuring a confession without ever having made a specific accusation. To this end, he had the criminal played rather colorlessly and photographed from an impressionistic distance, in such a way as to suggest almost any slight, blond, moustached, fairly good-looking man of forty; and when the part had been created to his satisfaction he was entirely confident that it would shatter the self-command of Byrne, not because it was a notably skilful reproduction of the man, but simply because his guilty imagination would see it as the finger of indictment pointing inexorably at himself. Any man who did not know what Quint knew, even if he were an intimate friend of Byrne, might see the film without being the wiser; whereas to Byrne himself it would seem that, since such a pictured drama could exist, all the world must be ready to cry his name and his deed from the housetops.

Quint had another reason for his extreme reticence in the portrayal of the murderer: he did not wish anything that occurred in the course of his preparations to publish Byrne's identity to Ruth Landis's alert consciousness.

At last the thing was done, as done as it could be in the circumstances. It might be a poor affair æsthetically—Quint was not worrying his head much about that—but he rather thought it served those practical ends of criminology for which he had organized it. In spite of his utter weariness with the whole undertaking, which during the days of exacting attention to fussy little details, had resolved itself into an inane piece of routine, he was astonished and encouraged to find himself prodigiously excited by the result, at his first private view of it in the rebuilt barn which served as Saltonstall's field laboratory. A first-rate job had been done in the simulation of moonlight, without impairment to the distinctness of the action; the lingering rhododendrons of June did their impressionistic best to make up for the magnolias of April; Ruth Landis's appearance and acting—the crucial points—seemed not so much a reproduction as a reincarnation of her dead sister; and the performance hung together as a coherent entity, in a way which, during the endless repetition of scraps with and without the camera, Quint had despaired of its ever attaining.

The film in its entirety constituted, he was now convinced, a full and detailed recital of Joel Byrne's actions from the moment when he backed his unlighted coupé into the bushes on the road south of Ellsworth's estate to the moment when he drove it, still unlighted and with a fast emptying radiator, back up the same road to what he supposed was permanent safety and freedom from consequences.

VI

QUINT's work on the case had not remained so dark a secret as he had hoped. One afternoon, just before his

preparations has reached completion, he was accosted on the street by Hamerton, of the police detective squad, a pompous and solemnly jocose personage who always made a point of taking Quint humorously, as if his young unofficial rival were some exquisite joke which he alone had the wit to see through. Also, he always called the young detective "Squint," a nickname which infuriated Quint except when it came from one or two of his genuine intimates.

"Hullo, Squint!" called Hamerton on the present occasion. "I hear you're on the Ellsworth job. How about it?"

"Oh, I may have something to show you in a few days," returned Quint with ostensible carelessness.

Hamerton came nearer, buttonholed Quint, and thrust his own face nearer.

"I hope to Gawd you get him, Squint," he said in a confidential undertone—"get him with the goods. Honest, I do."

"'Him'?"

"Why, yes. Ellsworth. You don't mean to say you have any doubt about *that*, do you?"

The detective recoiled.

"Good God!" he said explosively. "All I can say is, Hamerton, you and I are barking up entirely different trees. I suppose you've a good explanation of why Ellsworth would be paying me to 'get' him, as you say?"

"Oh, that's the old lady—both the old ladies, in fact. He's got to make a show of leaving no stone unturned, to satisfy his mother—and *her* mother. That's where *you* ring in. Well, stick him for a good fat fee, Squint, old boy. Frankly, I don't think you'll get anything else out of it. This is not the place to start anything against Norman J. Ellsworth, Esquire: he comes too damn near owning the whole burg and all the works. So long, Squint. Let me know if anything breaks."

Quint, as he hurried along, was caught between infuriation and amusement; but, after all, his chance meeting with Hamerton resulted in a slightly

different composition of his audience on the great night which was eventually picked to witness the culmination of his plans. At the last minute he called up Hamerton, found him disengaged, and invited him to bring three or four of his men, all in plain clothes, to the barn on Saltonstall's location that evening at quarter of nine.

He had already made sure of Byrne—with whom he had played golf no less than half a dozen times since the first afternoon—by arranging to take him out to the location for the purpose of meeting Saltonstall, on the nominal excuse that Saltonstall, well known to be an amateur of music, was eager to hear him play.

Quint hardly knew what to do about informing Ellsworth. He finally compromised by telephoning his client—for he thought he owed him no less—that this evening was to crown with success or brand with failure the entire labor of his investigation, and then leaving it to Ellsworth himself to decide whether he preferred the strain of being present to the somewhat different strain of absent suspense.

"I must warn you," said Quint, "that the experience will be frightfully intense and harrowing, perhaps a great shock to you. You have nothing to gain, except the probability of knowing the truth an hour or two earlier. The conditions I lay down are that, if you do go, you go on your own, as if you had nothing to do with me, and that you keep yourself under absolute control, whatever happens."

He specified the time and the place, said an encouraging word to hint his own quiet confidence of success, and rang off.

VII

It was a few minutes past eight when Byrne, driving once more the coupé which he invariably used himself, picked up the detective at Quint's apartment. The second half of the four miles out was over dirt roads. They drove leisurely, Quint keeping up an

inconsequent prattle about Saltonstall, his versatility, his eccentricities, his billion-dollar air. He wondered, while he talked, if he sounded as feverish and unnatural as he felt.

When they turned in between the tall stone posts of the farm gateway their headlights picked up Saltonstall himself, standing in colloquy with his secretary and an actress in front of the ex-barn which was used for trying out films. The producer left his two companions as the car approached, and strolled over to meet it. Quint introduced Byrne.

"I'm exceedingly glad to meet you, Mr. Bryne," said Saltonstall, "and exceedingly keen to hear you play, too, if you'll be so good, a little later. Had my piano-tuner out here three hours to-day, on your account; so you see I really mean it. I'm tied up for, say, half an hour at the outside. Do you mind? There'll be some odds and ends of my stuff going on in there: perhaps you gentlemen might like to see a movie in the raw—eh?"

He waved them urbanely toward the sliding carriage door of the old barn.

At the instant when Quint was about to slide this door open sufficiently to admit them, Joel Byrne did and said a strange thing—a thing which Quint's memory was later to hark back to and dwell upon again and again. His hand coincided with Quint's on the handle, holding and restraining it, and his face approached the detective's until, in the dim starlight, each was staring into the other's dilated eyes.

"It may just possibly interest you, Mr. Quint," murmured Joel Byrne, "or, again, it may not, to know that I always carry in this waistcoat pocket"—he tapped it lightly with the forefinger of his free hand—"enough cyanide of potassium to enable us all presently to say good night without any very clear expectation of seeing each other again by daylight."

It was the pressure of Byrne's hand, rather than of Quint's, which slid the hanging door open. And it was Byrne who passed in first.

PART 5

I

PETER QUINT was face to face with the fact that, thanks to some unaccountable miscalculation, the bottom had dropped out of his hopes.

To make a bad matter worse, his own action had ensured the greatest possible amount of publicity for his impending failure. Hamerton, whom, on an impulse, he had invited to assist at his triumph, was present with three of his men. Ruth Landis—who, he felt intuitively, wished him the worst of luck, though she had done her professional best for him—had unexpectedly slipped in, with the two actors who had supported her, just as the murder film was beginning. And, worst of all, Ellsworth was there, about to be tortured and harrowed unendurably, and all to no purpose whatever. There they all were, impassive spectators of his futility.

When Quint and Byrne entered through the carriage door at the rear, they stepped into the midst of some minor scenes from Saltonstall's new opus. The participating actors and actresses were there, seated in scattered pairs and groups on cheap folding chairs pulled forward from their places against the walls. As the episodes were run off, the players called out informal and slangy criticisms of themselves and of each other or demanded the repetition of certain parts. The place, a fairly large auditorium, was unlighted except for a glow from a housed-in projector on a platform by the carriage door and the reflection from the white screen at the other end. Quint and Byrne seated themselves on two chairs already placed, somewhat behind the middle of the floor. Ruth Landis, with her two companions, entered through a small swinging door midway of the right-hand wall, and seated themselves with their backs to this wall, so that they were partly facing the detective and his companion. Fortunately, they were unidentifiable in that light, except to one who was more

or less prepared, as Quint was, to infer who they must be.

Not until his eyes became accustomed to the gloom did he perceive that Ellsworth had come, after all, and ahead of himself; he, too, was seated against the right wall, but farther back, almost on a level with Quint. Hamerton and his trio entered at the rear and seated themselves along the left wall, just as the operator was calling from his cage: "That'll be all of this for to-night, ladies and gentlemen. There's nothing more, except I'm going to run this here murder scene once through."

The extraneous players strung out by two's and three's, some through the small door at the right, some at the rear, all of them chatting vociferously.

Quint, in his position at the middle rear, was excellently placed to watch the others, if only he had had the heart to lift his eyes from the dusty floor. Byrne, a few feet to his left and slightly forward; Ellsworth, on a line with Byrne against the right wall; and Ruth Landis, with her escort, still farther and to the right—these formed the corners of a triangle, each point of which was equally visible to the detective from where he sat. They, with the Hamerton group far over against the left wall and the operator and his assistant, were the only persons in the room.

II

DOGGEDLY, Quint compelled himself to alertness as, without title or other preliminary, the film began. He could feel a sudden tenseness from the right as Ellsworth recognized the scene—the edge of the grounds. Oddly, it was longer before Byrne caught a clue: his attention was drooping, and he looked, indeed, mildly bored.

The coupé—make and year indeterminate—approached down the road, turned round, maneuvering cautiously in the narrow space, and backed into the bushes. Its driver emerged, after an interval, with an implement in his hand. He hurried along the road, paused at the telephone shack, and scanned the road

in both directions. . . . It was at this point that Quint felt Byrne's interest tauten. The detective's heart thumped; even against the weight of his premonition that he was beaten, his hopes began to rise. Yet—he could not deceive himself about this—there was an element of cold and disinterested curiosity in Byrne's intentness, as though he, the guilty, were trying this scenario, the accuser, and expecting to find it wanting in some unexplained kind of adequacy.

With a quick and determined prying heave of his implement the man in the road broke the fastening of the wooden shutter over the window-hole. (Quint had arranged this with Davenport & Lowell.) He pushed the window in, located the telephone instrument on the ledge inside, and let the shutter close. Then, stepping behind the shack, he opened the iron gate in the fence, entered the grounds, and, softly closing the gate behind himself, tiptoed hurriedly across soft turf and through shrubbery toward the summer-house among the rhododendrons. . . . Byrne settled down to a supercilious kind of approval. His bearing seemed to say: "Really, you know, this is all rather clever, in its way."

Ellsworth's rigidity was inflexible, grim. It was on him, Quint noted with a heart-sick dismay, that all the impact of the scene was falling.

The stalker waited for his prey. The affair of the cigarette, furtively lighted, smoked in nervous and deep inhalations, seemed to puzzle Byrne: he actually flashed his puzzlement to Quint in a quick glance through the gloom. Rationally considered, the effrontery of the man's naturalness was staggering; and yet the feeling grew upon Quint, and persisted in the face of logic, that there was more in it than acting, more than mere poise or a desperate pose.

A neat bit of photography had been contrived, by means largely artificial, to show the figures of Margaret Landys and her lover, much diminished by perspective, passing and repassing the lighted door, very much as the murderer

must have glimpsed them from his sentinel's post, in the instant before he dashed off across the sward to telephone his message. Here a printed title announced: *"He telephones his wife, as if from down-town, that he has been called out of town, and asks her to explain immediately to his host of the evening."*

At this point Quint's glance shifted toward Ellsworth. Ellsworth's face came toward him slowly, as if drawn irresistibly from the screen; Ellsworth's eyes glowered past him toward Byrne; and Quint was aware, as if a strange chemical precipitation had occurred in the atmosphere of the room, when Ellsworth's nerves thrilled to the identity of the friend who had betrayed him—his identity as the murderer of his betrothed, and his identity as that slight, hunched-up, ironically attentive figure in the chair beyond Quint. Ellsworth seemed to grow physically larger with the conviction that swelled within him. Quint shuddered in the anticipation of some outbreak terrible beyond all anticipating. For seconds that seemed cycles, Ellsworth was locked in a struggle with part of himself; then his face turned slowly back to the screen, and he gave himself to watching. But in his watching there was a quality more profoundly awful than insanity itself. Peter Quint shivered again when he thought what he had contrived to do to this good, this utterly kind and simple man—and in vain, all in vain. Ellsworth must hate him eternally. . . . It was strange, though, that the truth could be so hollow in its effect, so like a grotesque lie.

The Ellsworth of the picture was shown only at a distance, crossing and recrossing before the shining doorway with his affianced. It was a dainty and gracious passage of romance, as exquisite as a glimpse of old-world lovers caught through the casement of millioned windows bowered in roses. And there was a twist of shrewd irony in the circumstance that the eyes through which it was seen were the eyes of the murderer, watching from his covert

and waiting to pounce on the moment when his telephone message should take effect. Then the butler—a mere shadowy suggestion of a butler, filled in by Quint himself—stepped to the doorway to announce: "A telephone call for you, sir."

At this point impressionism and suggestion dissolved into clear-cut realism. Margaret Landys was shown in a close-up, like a garden lily in her evening gown with the creamy scarf across her shoulders, wistful and tender in the moonlight, blowing the lightest of kisses to her lover as he vanished through the doorway, smiling an involuntary butterfly smile at her own thoughts as she turned down the path to wait for him in her favorite coign. Just here—or was Quint mistaken?—Byrne almost audibly sneered. It was a demonstration that froze Quint's blood into a cold and helpless rage. What was the man made of, that he could support this glare of damning truth, focused upon himself, and still maintain his half truculent contempt?

Quint had devoted an almost prohibitive amount of speculation to the problem of how the murderer and his victim had come upon each other. At length he had decided on what was, comparatively, an evasion of the problem. The picture showed, after a blank, a simple confrontation in the path at the steps of the summer-house, the man impassive, rather challenging, the woman's face set in a wordless stare of incomprehension. Another hiatus, during which the screen was merely a black square; then the woman turning to go—the murderer's pounce from behind—the instant of writhing struggle, the fall of a body borne down rather by irresistible muscular force than by weight—and, after, prone stillness. The picture mercifully abated the horror by making the murderer's body almost completely hide his victim's; but even so. . . .

The rest of the picture moved, after that prolonged lethal embrace, with what seemed dizzying speed. The murderer wrenched himself free from the white heap at the foot of the steps,

stared appalled at his horrible hands, wiped them with frantic haste on the crumpled disarray which had been a smooth silken scarf, and ran unsteadily from the spot, looking back over his shoulder with eyes of panic and drawing an automatic pistol fitted with the clumsy silencing device. The camera traced him out through the gate and along the fence to his car. It showed him pausing uncertainly, listening, scanning the road in each direction, and kneeling down at the radiator to unscrew the plug with unnerved and violently trembling fingers from which he must somehow remove the last stains of his deed. The plug dropped among the weeds; he pawed for it hysterically, stopped to let the steamy water play over his hands, pawed again, and in a spasm of ungovernable terror lurched into the driver's seat, started his engine, and was gone.

The picture showed the coupé receding down the road. Then the camera picked up the trail of the leaky radiator, a dark streak in the dust, and followed it slowly back to the pool among the roadside leaves, coming to rest on a close-up of the radiator plug and the automatic pistol, placed as Quint had originally found them there. Finally, in a fugitive glimpse, the whiteness of the murdered woman's body, still lying in its nondescript heap by the steps, and her lover bending over it, an agony of horror and wild disbelief on his face.

Then—a blinding glare of electricity as the operator flashed on all the lights in the place.

III

A COMPLEX and swift drama of three faces surcharged the next instant, before a muscle was moved or a word said; and Quint, from his post a little behind, saw it all. Ellsworth's look, lapsing from the screen, came to rest on the face of Ruth Landis. At the same instant Joel Byrne's eyes reached the same objective. To Quint's astonishment, there appeared on both men's faces identically the same look—a look

of incredulous ecstasy, revelation, fulfillment. It was as clear as the daylight that Ellsworth, overwhelmed by a purely physical identity, thought for an instant that he was looking upon the living self of his dead sweetheart—but what could explain that same expression in Byrne's eyes? As for Ruth Landis, she saw only Byrne, and the message her eyes carried was of mingled triumph and dread. So the triangle held for a sequence of seconds, the two men staring at the one woman, and she staring at the one man.

Byrne was the first to change. His awe became a question; the question found its answer; and he was suddenly himself again. His eyes, brimming over with irony, turned toward Quint. But what they met was the face of Ellsworth, who, in the instant of throwing off his illusion, found everything washed from his consciousness except the overmastering necessity of revenge. His expression was of that awful intensity which Quint had first seen on the day—how ineffably remote now!—on which Ellsworth had first mentioned the detail of the murderer's wiping his hands on the dead girl's scarf.

Byrne rose to his feet as Ellsworth came charging at him, but, oddly, made no effort to get out of the way. It was as though, with an ironic and pitying smile, he passively offered himself to destruction. At the second of Ruth Landis's piercing scream, Quint flung himself forward at Ellsworth, round whose knees his arms met in an effective football tackle. Ellsworth came down with a crash, his head striking against the chair from which Byrne had just risen. Quint lay there, clasping his client's knees and thinking out what was to be done next. Even in the stress of that pressing exigency—so queer an instrument is the human consciousness, so incapable in a crisis of extricating the starkly awful from the grotesque and ludicrous—he heard some irresponsible fraction of his own mind saying distinctly:

"This man whose knees you are hugging is a millionaire. It isn't every day,

Peter Quint, that you casually upset a *bona fide* millionaire. Yet here he is, full length on this very noticeably dirty barn floor, just as naturally as if he were of no more account in the world than you are."

Byrne and Ruth Landis, he saw while he waited, drew slowly together in the middle of the open space between them, never letting go their hold of each other's eyes.

"You!" he heard Byrne say; and then they were in each other's arms, whispering feverishly, looking into each other's eyes in as uplifted an abandonment as if they had been two lovers come together in some windswept mountain solitude.

The Hamertons were shuffling uneasily. Ellsworth groaned feebly, still lying inert, and opened his eyes.

"Why did you stop me?" he demanded. "It *was* you, wasn't it?"

Quint helped him to his feet—he was groggy and dazed, but not injured—and guided him to the door at the rear. They passed out, closing the door, and walked back and forth in a short stretch of the path, Quint's arm round the other's shoulders.

"I wish I could as easily answer the questions you haven't asked yet," said Quint finally. "One answer is that you are hardly the person to be killing Doris Winthrop's husband, whoever he is or whatever he has done. Am I right?"

"You are, indeed," conceded Ellsworth warmly, after a pause. "Forgive me, Quint, I shouldn't have needed to be told that."

"All right. Another answer is that"—Quint nearly choked over this, but in the end he got it out—"that Byrne apparently did not commit this crime. I have come to the point where I would almost stake my life on his being as innocent of the actual deed as you or I."

Ellsworth stopped dead, facing Quint, aghast.

"Then what, in God's name," he cried out in a terrible voice, "is the meaning of all this foolery?" He gestured helplessly toward the silent barn.

"I admit, absolutely, your right to say that," answered Quint humbly. "Yet, please remember, before you say any more, that, if I have made the blunder of my life tonight, I am certain to pay heavily for it, and in more ways than you will ever know. The whole thing is much more complicated than you can have any idea of; and this business of tonight, though it has somehow gone askew and proved the opposite of what I counted on, isn't so nearly wasted as you suppose. By putting things together in a way I never got an inkling of before, I am just beginning to see dimly where all this comes out. Now, I claim one more half hour of forbearance from you, and it's the last thing I shall ask. Will you stand by while I go in there and put my cards on the table before those two?"

His suffering was so manifest that Ellsworth, even with his tremendous and strangling preoccupations, could not help being touched by it.

"You make me feel horribly ungenerous and petty, Quint," he said hastily. "Go through with this in any way that seems best. Only—come and be frank with me afterward. I'm nearly going mad with this uncertainty. I'll walk and smoke out here, I think."

He pressed the detective's hand reassuringly.

IV

THE wait for Quint's return was one of those experiences which a man never forgets, though he live to be ninety. It seemed like an endless nightmare of suspense. Ellsworth smoked his first cigar pacing the walk; then, feeling dizzy and weak, he went and sat down in the tonneau of his touring car to smoke his second. When this was done, he felt ill from smoking so furiously, and paced the walk again until he was steadier. Having walked himself into exhaustion, he went back to the tonneau; and there he was sitting, his head bowed in his hands, when the creak of the sliding door jerked him upright. Quint stepped out through a

narrow rectangle of light which closed and vanished behind him. Ellsworth sprang forward to meet the detective, grasped him by the arm.

"Why, man, you're all of a tremble!" he said. "Come over here and sit down." Together they went back to Ellsworth's car.

Quint blurted out the crude gist of his news as if it were poison that he could not rid himself of quickly enough.

"It's done," he said—"done—solved—finished. We know now—and small thanks to anything I've done, except in the most indirect and accidental way."

"Byrne?" asked Ellsworth hoarsely.

"Ruth Landis."

It was Ellsworth who was trembling now.

"Ruth Landis killed her sister?" he cried, as if to state the idea were to prove its monstrous absurdity.

"—And played the part of that sister being killed."

Ellsworth sank back against the seat, his face covered. After a moment his hands came down, clenched themselves. "But I don't understand, I don't understand." It was almost a sob, and his face was unrecognizably twisted. "Tell me—tell me."

Quint, with one steadying hand on his arm, spoke in a low voice. "I ought to have pieced it together before, from a hint here and there—things that Byrne let slip. Yes, I've been cultivating his acquaintance. I suppose I was too wrapped up in my own idea; I unconsciously dodged the meaning of everything that would have stopped me from carrying it through. Well—I've had my lesson, and got it cheap."

"Begin with the picture. It was all true, up to a certain point. Byrne was there that night; he went there to kill Margaret Landys—only he thought she was Ruth Landis."

"But—why, everyone knew my fiancée's name," protested Ellsworth. "It was in all the papers, again and again. There couldn't have been any such mistake."

"These sisters were named with the

same names, inverted, as twins of the same sex often are—Margaret Ruth and Ruth Margaret. Byrne lived with Ruth Margaret Landis for a year and a half, seven years ago. She never told him any details about her family—except to remark casually once that she had used to spell her last name differently. He detested the name 'Ruth,' and always called her 'Mag.' He is calling her that now, in there. . . . When he saw your engagement reported, the first thought that came into his head was that Ruth Landis had changed the order of her given names and the spelling of her last name, to help disguise her circus associations. Also, your fiancée was from Wilmington; and he happened to know that Ruth Landis grew up in Wilmington. The fact of the twinship was something that he would never have blundered upon: her people never mention it, because its associations are all too painful, and she herself has never mentioned it, because it seems to be one symptom of her warped mental condition to hate or ignore the existence of her family. You see? So, when your fiancée first came to Framstead, Byrne watched for a chance to see her without being seen. He saw her; she was, to all appearances, the woman he had known; and after that it never occurred to him to doubt.

"Go back to the picture. Byrne, you may have noticed, was never at your house during the time of Miss Landys's visit; he was always pre-engaged for one thing or another. But all that time he was watching, learning her habits, her favorite walks, how she spent her time. More than once he was almost within earshot of you two as you strolled about the gardens or down to the summer-house. All this was perfectly easy, you see, because if he ran into a gardener or anyone he had only to declare himself and appear to be on his way to the house, to drop in on you informally. He was astonished, of course, at the change in the woman whom he supposed he had known—but, after all, it was six years since he had seen her.

"On the night of your dinner he thought he saw his chance. He had already schemed out his use of the telephone booth at your gate, and discovered, quite by chance, that the gate was unlocked. On that night he drove out there, to the spot used in the picture—not coming through the back road and turning his car round, as I had it, but simply driving up the main road and turning off into the back road, so that he didn't have to turn round at all. My mistake! and that was why, as I noticed, the picture didn't catch his attention for the first minute or two. I shouldn't have made that miscue: I should have left out everything that could as easily have happened one way as another.

"He pried open the window—it was with a tire tool instead of a cold chisel—and went through the gate up to the summer-house and waited. You and Miss Landys came out; he hurried back and did his telephoning. Incidentally, he didn't do this from outside the shanty, as I inferred: he reached through the window, slid the catch of the door, opened the door, and went in, closing both the door and the window. You see, he was not nearly so cool about some of these details as I represented him, and he was very glad to be out of sight while he was doing that telephoning. He has just taken great pleasure in twitting me with point after point of my own stupidity, quite as if he were bantering me about my bad putting in a match we had just played for a dollar a hole."

"Why, the man is a born criminal!" exclaimed Ellsworth, immeasurably shocked.

Quint shrugged. "He freezes one's blood—yes. Perhaps something that he couldn't help has frozen his.

"Now, let me tell you what actually happened, from his point of view. He finished his telephoning, closed the booth, went back into the grounds, and got half-way up to the summer-house; and there he suddenly realized that his knees were knocking together. He could not make out why, because up to

that point he had felt perfectly settled and calm about it all, as one does about a thing that one has fully made up one's mind to; the worst part is making up one's mind. He stopped and tried to analyze his sensations; and what do you suppose he discovered? What had stopped him short was nothing more nor less than an odor—a perfectly familiar odor that floated to him down the slope, very faint, but unmistakable. A smell!

"Do you remember that, in the picture, he smoked a cigarette to steady his nerves, and dropped the end over the railing into the rhododendron bushes? I found that cigarette end the first day I went over your grounds. It was of a brand which I had never heard of—Nepenthe. I hunted high and low for it in Framstead; no one else had ever heard of it, either, so I had some duplicates made—duplicates in appearance, at least—and when Byrne was at my place one night I deliberately offered them to him. He gasped and turned pale and sick, and finally laughed it off and advised me to let Nepenthes alone. The next day I took the tobacco from the original stub to an organic chemist. It was tobacco, yes—mixed with a preparation of hasheesh.

"Ellsworth, I haven't words to tell you what a fool I seem to myself—now. When Byrne collapsed at sight of those fake Nepenthes, I took it as a symptom of his guilty conscience. It was my purpose to suggest to him, by subtle strokes here and there, that his crime was perfectly well known; so that eventually he would find it easier to blurt it all out than to carry the load round with him any longer. It was a very poor estimate of my man—but I took his reaction to the cigarettes as a sign that the charm was going to work. What truly happened, and what I ought to have seen, was that he really was sick at the sight of the cigarettes themselves, and not merely at the thought of their associations. His reaction was entirely genuine and natural and—innocent.

"Eight years ago, he tells us, he found these cigarettes in Tahiti, and brought

a lot of them back with him. Smoked in the numbers he used, they are a pretty powerful drug. Like all drug fiends, he was possessed to share his sensations. He passed these things on to Ruth Landis, and together they used them for a year and a half. He found ways to keep the supply coming at intervals. Then, after he and Ruth Landis parted, he was overcome by one of his periodical fits of devotion to his art. He had the idea that he was going to settle down and become a tremendous composer. So, in disgust at his way of life and his habitual excesses, he packed himself off to an institution for dipsomaniacs and drug users and went faithfully through the regular cure. He came out cured, too, so far as hasheesh is concerned; and, unlike most of them, he has stayed cured. The sight or suggestion of hasheesh still turns his stomach. . . .

But Ruth Landis, it seems, kept on with her imported Nephthes. It was she, not he, who was steadying herself with a cigarette in the summer-house. She had come there just after he left it to go down to the telephone station; and it was her smoke that stopped him short on his way back. Of course, he didn't know the truth of this until tonight. All it meant to him then was that your fiancée was not actually the regenerated young woman she looked and acted like. He drew, you see, the obvious conclusion that she was in the summer-house, alone.

V

"Just because of that trivial interference with his plans, he felt very doubtful about being able to go on with his act. He sat there on the grass for a long time, as it seemed to him, trying to whip his will into control. Then he thought he heard low voices—women's voices—on the path above, and then a muffled sound like someone falling. He crawled along toward the summer-house. When he parted the bushes to look through, there on the ground by the steps he saw a shapeless sort of

heap, part light and part dark. It writhed and twisted for a while, and then lay still. And then part of it, the dark part, got up and pulled itself away, leaving the rest of it lying there. Byrne crawled farther forward through the bushes, and the leaves swished.

"The noise startled—whatever it was that was going away. It stopped and looked back; and he saw distinctly, looking white and pale and awful in the moonlight, the face of Ruth Landis. Then she slipped round the corner of the summer-house and was gone without a sound among the bushes.

"He stood there for some time, with his knees still knocking together so that the bushes touching him quivered and rustled. Then he pulled himself forward and bent over the white thing on the ground by the steps. And that was Ruth Landis, too—with a heart that did not beat. . . .

"Byrne is by temperament, in spite of his biting skepticism, something of a mystic. He will believe anything, if he thinks he sees it—and he has seen some strange things, with and without the help of drugs. What he thought now was that he had seen a mortal struggle between the two parts of Ruth Landis—the good, angelic part that wanted to marry you and settle down into a respectable housewife, and the wild, self-willed, devil-may-care part that had lived with him for a year and a half, seven years ago. It was the wild, untamed part that turned out to be the stronger; and, since the two could not live permanently in the same body, it had killed the other part. . . . As a matter of fact, Ellsworth, I seem to see something in his idea—if you don't take it too literally. The unyielding and murderous clash of wills between those two women of the same blood, born in the same hour, is really a good bit like the war of two conflicting souls that cannot live in the same body—for they really had pretty much the same body, you see. Or like two contradictory parts of the same soul, housed in identical bodies, and doomed to fight each other until one of them is dead. There

are things like that in life, don't we all know well enough? Life's a civil war for most of us, one way or another. Well, well. . . .

"Anyway, Byrne was convinced he had seen something that amounted to a ghost. A woman was dead, as he knew by the papers and the talk; and yet he kept seeing her—on the street, once in a department store, once or twice in a motor-car; several times altogether. I should have known from a chance remark of his about ghosts, as soon as you told me of Ruth Landis—if I hadn't been a self-willed fool.

"To finish: Byrne ran back in a panic to where he had left his car; and there he sprawled on the grass and was deathly sick. Being sick and retching took the terror out of him; and when he got over it his first impulse was to wet his handkerchief and scrub his face clean. His face and hands, I imagine, were in a pretty awful state. He washed himself and tossed two handkerchiefs away into the bushes; and in the process he managed to part company with his gun and his radiator plug—which I have so very cleverly turned into evidence of a crime he never committed. . . . This spoiled his alibi, incidentally. He had discovered a way of getting into and out of his club secretly, through a delivery entrance into the cellar. He had made arrangements with the steward, a little after seven, to put him up a box luncheon and take it to him in the writing room at 8:05 sharp. Said he had important letters to write before going to his train and couldn't take time to dine. He was expecting to stop at the club on the way back, sneak in through the cellar, go upstairs, and be in the writing room at 8:05, just as if he had been there since quarter past seven."

VI

ELLSWORTH shook his head in stupefaction. He did not need to say that he had never before been called upon to estimate an ingenuity or a malevolence so far outside the orbit of his own conceptions.

"Ellsworth," said Quint solemnly, "after this, I wouldn't give three sneers for all the circumstantial evidence in the world—especially in connection with a wholly incalculable being like Joel Byrne. Things have a way of turning out to prove the opposite of what they seem to. He asked me, just now, what it was that first started me off on the theory that he needed investigation. I told him it was my discovery that he had not received any such telegram as the one he pretended to receive, calling him out of town. He began to laugh—a horrible, crazy, sardonic sort of chuckle that seemed as if it would never stop. You see, he really *did* receive a telegram that day, and it really did necessitate his going to New York. It came by Postal Telegraph instead of Western Union, and it had been sent three days before, and it was delivered to his club mail-box in a sealed envelope, and he had just found it there, exactly as he said. What I should have seen is that he is an instinctively and almost desperately truthful person, and that he would disdain inventing a lie except for some overwhelmingly necessary reason.

"They can't say that 'circumstances alter cases.' Wrong, Ellsworth! It's the cases that alter circumstances. The one consistent and dependable element in this case is—the characters of those two in there. Know those, and you can put your finger on the rest. Without that knowledge, the material evidence all goes to prove—a sheer falsehood. But how long it has taken me to find it out!" He fell silent, musing.

"Why, Quint," exclaimed Ellsworth finally, "it's more insoluble than ever. What on earth were the motives in all this? Why, for instance, did Ruth Landis want to kill her sister? And do those two"—he motioned toward the barn—"hate or love each other, or what? It's beyond me. And how did you get it all out of them, anyway?"

"I'll answer your last question first: I simply walked in there to tell *them*, not to ask them to tell me. The whole thing had been coming straight in my mind from the moment when the lights

came on and I saw them together. Byrne looked at me as if I had been some sort of crawling insect; but Miss Landis walked straight up to me and said: 'I am ready to have you know, Mr. Quint, that it was I who killed my sister.' As for Byrne, he let a good bit out in the process of airing his utter contempt for my deductions. You see, he had sensed my dishonesty almost from the beginning. He knew I was playing some sort of game with him—I must have done my acting badly! It was his idea to let me make all the moves—and all the mistakes. I suppose he got considerable gratification out of seeing me flounder and make a fool of myself. In anticipation, he was gloating over the moment when he could cut loose and tell me what he thought of me—though he hardly expected it to come as it did. . . . You see, he felt absolutely secure on the main issue—simply because, with all the will in the world, he hadn't committed the murder!"

"It's not possible that she was taking it all upon herself in order to save him? No; I see that's absurd. But—what is the relation between them?"

"It is a strange thing to say, Ellsworth, but, do you know, it seems to me that, in a more intense way than I have ever known of before in real life, they *love* each other. Byrne, you perceive, is fundamentally the artist; and he has all the predestined artist's craving for such love as men do not seem to get from ordinary mortal women. Think of all the nymphs and pixies and trolls and witch-women and vampires whom men like Byrne have invented to love and be loved by. Artists love so scandalously many women, one after another, not so much because they are more faithless than other men, but because they are more faithful to the quest of the one whom they search for eternally and never really find. Men like Byrne must imagine that they have something that does not fade or change with the years or grow stale in domestic habit and routine; they crave surprise, mystery, excitement, the unpredictable. Most of them take it out in pure imag-

ination; but Byrne thought he had found it in a flesh-and-blood woman. These two appear to have come together in a frenzy of self-abandonment at a time when the woman was young, free, lonely, and ripe for adventure. They loved each other madly—not as the novelists mean by 'madly,' but with actual frenzy, physical and spiritual. They do still: you can see it in their eyes now, while they are together. It is as irresistible as a whirlwind. . . .

"Well, she was jealous, among other traits—jealous of his time, his friends, his absences, his interest in music, anything that spoiled the single-mindedness of her abandon. She threatened his life. Once she actually assaulted him and thought she had killed him; then she tried to kill herself for having done it. They loved each other with a fury almost indistinguishable from hate. Perhaps such love as that is hate, in essence: anyway, it means that the one for whom you feel it has a unique and terrible power over you. Byrne, as they say, could neither live with her nor without her; she was both sustenance and a consuming fire to him. And—though this, too, sounds a bit queer—I honestly believe that, after all this long time, he wanted to kill her in self-defense against her power over him.

"On the surface, of course, it was his certainty that she would leave nothing undone to ruin him, when she found him married as he was. He knew that she would go into one of her murderous rages, storm at him, expose his past along with her own, and leave him an outcast adventurer, to begin all over again. And, of course, he is getting to the time of life at which a man values money and a secure position, comfort and freedom from problems. Yet Byrne is not the man to commit murder for such things: he takes them too humorously and doesn't believe in them hard enough.

"No: at bottom, his motive for trying to kill Ruth Landis was just the knowledge that her old spell over him would be as strong as ever, once he saw her, and that he could never stand the

challenge of her constant nearness without going off his head about her in the same old way. And this he couldn't submit to: it was too much of an affront to his own dignity, after he had spent six years getting his balance. Even a man like Byrne has to believe in *something*. What he believed in was the six years he had spent getting over her, and planning another life for himself. He wanted to cling to the peace he had found. And he is so curiously constituted that, I really believe, he would have had peace, and become a quite decent husband and neighbor, perhaps a considerable musician—if his crime had gone off as he planned, without all this singular business of ghosts. . . . Another man might have run away, or killed himself instead of the woman. Not Byrne: he had made up his mind, with cold definiteness, to a particular kind of life, and he meant to see it through—even though it meant killing a woman to stop an outbreak of the old fever in his blood."

Quint stopped: his eyes grew dreamy and absent in contemplation of this strangest of all passions—a love so potent that an intensely civilized being would choose rather to commit the starkest of crimes than to suffer a renewal of its incalculable sway over him.

VII

It was a moment before Ellsworth spoke.

"It seems to be Byrne's side of this that fascinates you," he then said patiently, "and I don't know that I much blame you. But—you'll understand my own anxiety to know why this girl couldn't be happy without taking my happiness away from me."

Quint made a gesture of despair.

"Ah, that!" he said. "If I could make that legible to you—! My dear Ellsworth, your riddle is one step beyond the end of my tether.

"The simplest thing to say is that the girl is mad. And that's true, as far as it goes. She is warped, twisted, not herself—not the same person from one

moment to the next. Call it, if you like, a delusion of persecution—if you think that explains anything. She has had, broodingly, for years, the curious *idée fixe* that her sister's existence somehow prevented her from being what she would naturally have been. I don't mean that she wanted to *be* her sister, or at all like her, or that she coveted her sister's place at home or in society. It wasn't that at all. I suppose, partly, it was that she felt her sister's difference as a standing reproach to what she herself was. And this maddened her unendurably—the more so, perhaps, because she herself felt utterly unable to change, or to wish to change; also because her sister had never, by word or look, expressed anything but devotion to her.

"It was an unreasoning antipathy, involving curious delusions. . . . She doesn't even remember her own mental attitude very consistently. She thinks she had, at one time, the fantastic idea of dressing in her sister's clothes and impersonating her—going through the marriage and all. And her idea in that was to make everybody involved suffer unspeakable tortures—to vent hatred on herself by putting herself into a position she'd have loathed; to make you endure the discovery that the woman you had married was gradually becoming entirely unlike what you had supposed her; to trample on her mother's remnant of happiness by letting her see her one remaining daughter go the way of the other. But she isn't very definite about all this. What is clear is that she accosted her sister to ask for a considerable sum of money, knowing that her sister had no way of getting it without asking you—and also knowing that she wouldn't ask you."

"Oh!" cried Ellsworth, "how gladly . . ."

"I know," said Quint; "I know. But, you see, she'd never have asked if she hadn't known she'd be refused. She didn't want the money; probably she wouldn't have taken it if it had been held out to her. She wanted a refusal that would serve as a spur to her hatred,

incite it to action. . . . She met her sister in the path under the magnolias, just after you went in to telephone; they walked toward the summer-house together, talking; and then, having used the refusal to work herself up into one of her murderous rages, she—pounced. . . . I think we are quite safe to call it madness, and let the word cover all these baffling questions, as it covers a multitude of sins."

Ellsworth shuddered.

"But what," he said at length, "what on earth is to become of those two? How can such people either be killed or—let live? What do we *do* about them?"

This, Quint noticed by the way, was a far cry from the acute physical impulse to revenge which had mastered Ellsworth when, first, he had been dealing with an unknown and mysterious criminal, and when, later, he had supposed the criminal to be Byrne.

"There, happily," returned Quint, "we've not to do much worrying. For it is all done for us—taken out of our hands. The only hard part will fall on you—for you will have to be the one to make the necessary explanations to your mother, and to Mrs. Landys, and to—Mrs. Byrne. If you ask me, the less you tell them, outside the few essential facts, the better it will be for everybody concerned. I suggest that you go back to your own house, at once."

Quint looked at his watch, holding it over the back of the front seat so that it caught the glow of the dash light.

"Hamerton and his men are posted outside that small door round the corner," he said. "Those two are alone, in there. In fifteen minutes I shall go back to them."

"When I came out just now, Bryne asked me to give them one hour alone together, without interruption or interference. He looked me very straight in the eye. I promised it, knowing well enough what he meant, and knowing, too, that there could be no better way. As I went out to the door, he said to me, quite coolly, 'Good-bye, then, Mr. Quint.' Both of those two are the kind who know when they have lost—when life has become, suddenly, too much for them. They are not the ones to prolong an impossible situation, or to run it into the ground of anti-climax, absurdities of the courtroom, lawyers' sparring and haggling.

"Byrne has with him, at this moment, a sufficient amount of the deadliest of poisons. When his hour strikes, they will make use of it—together. You and I must not know of this, in advance of the fact: it is scarcely a thing to connive at, except between ourselves. You shall hear from me within the half-hour, by Saltonstall's telephone. Already, they may have. . . .

"You will see, I think, when all this is over, that I have merely let them choose the only thinkable way. I have not been able to see that you and I need grudge them, self-confessed seekers of experience as they are, the final experience of dying in each other's arms."

(The End)



WHEN a man begins sending a girl candy, people start talking about him. When he begins sending her jewelry, they start talking about her.



WORK, if you would be rich, not by the sweat of your brow, but by the sweat of your conscience.

Conclusively

By Thomas R. Reid, Jr.

HE was a Southern college professor, reared and educated in the South. He had spent the greater part of the day in long harangues to his classes on the inferiority of the Negro. He had employed very possible authority to show there was an "inescapable" difference between the races which could never be wiped out; he had demonstrated to his own satisfaction that a "nigger" could never be anything but a hewer of wood and a drawer of water; he had proved "conclusively" that the State simply wasted money in providing schools of higher education for negroes.

Well satisfied with his day's effort, he went home, spent an hour or more reading Braithwaite's "Anthology of Magazine Verse," and later in the evening took his family to the local theatre to see a moving-picture version of Alexandre Dumas' "The Count of Monte Cristo."



Horizons

By Donald Bellows

OUR youth was troubled with too many words,
Too many questionings and vain replies,
Sent hotly out, returning home like birds
Broken and spent from beating empty skies.
We looked beyond each other with blind eyes,
Seeking the gold, the glimpsed and golden towers
Of some perfection that forever lies
Beyond the near horizon that was ours.

Had some good sage with mellow words to share
Come then and told me: "He whose youth shall win
But so much gold as lights one woman's hair,
Is richer than the kings of earth have been,
And lord of living in a plenteous land" . . .
I might have had the wit to understand.



The Memoirs of Another Young Man of Thirty

By F. Gregory Hartswick

I

Education

Yale. . . . The Münchner at the Hofbräu, Hughie Reynolds', Mory's, the lectures of A. G. Keller, the Taft bar, my first Daiquiri, Mellone's, Heublein's, C—— W——'s bachelor dinner, Tuttle's ale, Fish-house punch. . .

II

A Man's Work in the World

New York. . . . Scheffel Hall and its Pilsner, the Broztell bar and Nick, the Dutch bartender; Alexandras and Angel's Dreams, Lüchow's, the Alt Heidelberg, the first of May at the Hofbräu when the May Wine was on tap; an unnamed bar in East Twenty-third Street and its Workingman's Five Cents' Worth; my first raise in salary and the party that night; a peach *bowle*. . .

III

Art and Literature

THE back room of "The Old Farm." . . . Nietzsche vs. Marx, fought out over enormous mugs; the night N—— P—— left for China to write articles, and the speech I made from the vacant niche in Washington Arch; ale and onion sandwiches at McSorley's, with Matisse and Cezanne flashing through the aroma; the theatre, with the play getting vague about the middle of the second act, necessitating a trip to Browne's or the Kaiserkeller; the beginnings of a taste for Scotch; the whiskey

sours they mixed at the Vanderbilt; experiments with the representation of sounds by means of colors on canvas; the evening I invented a new cocktail. . . .

IV

War

THE night I sailed; the beneficent French Line and the smoking-room of the *Chicago*; the man who wanted to get a crowd of us to take a schooner and explore the land around the Cape of Good Hope after the war, and his ability to absorb brandy; St. Emilion, Chateaux Margeaux, Veuve Clicquot; Christmas at Longpont, just south of Soissons, and the entente cordiale arrived at by getting our French lieutenant into a state of total immersion; Cointreau triple-sec; an invitation, behind a hand, from a Frenchman to visit his house and *etrangler un perroquet*, a ceremony performed with "vrai Pernot"; the taste of brandy after three days and nights of sleeplessness; Moulin a Vent; Graves; Pol Roger; the primal urge to kill a man (our American commanding officer); *pinard*, swigged from a poilu's verdigris-crusted bidon. . . .

V

Aftermath

WASHINGTON, waiting for our discharges, and bootleg varnish at \$15 a quart; New York again . . . the rapturous discovery of new places; the day I first carried a suitcase full of sherry

through the streets, and the exquisite thrill of passing a policeman with my cargo; the three great waves of imported stuff: whiskey, gin, and Bacardi; a feeling of thankfulness for the fact that the Lord created Israel and the illicit peddlings of rabbinical wines at surprisingly low prices; applejack; the discovery of two places where real beer is served. . . .



Interregnum

By Elizabeth J. Coatsworth

HERE in the city Autumn passes us
 Almost unnoticed—there is not so much
 As one young poplar casting down its leaves
 Reverent before the penitential winter
 The roofs of houses do not gather haloes
 As hills do, gently round their dreaming crests,
 Nor can the sun warm pavements to a smell
 Of loam and fruit and fires and decay.

But no one fails to know December skies
 Slated like a cathedral, every spout
 A-drip with water. Then each paving stone
 Is turned a floor-tomb, hiding skeletons
 And the crowd hurries, doubled as it goes,
 With hands that seek the shelter of the throat
 While all the city bends a flinching back
 Beneath the whistling scourges of the wind.



ONE man succeeds another where women are concerned. One woman crowds out another where men are concerned.



HEROISM comes from forgetting one's self. Fame, from never forgetting one's self.



FLATTERY is the art of pretending to like the girl more than you like the kiss.



Répétition Générale

By H. L. Mencken and George Jean Nathan

§ 1

Vox Populi, Vox Dei.—The latest beau of the boob metaphysic is the Honorable M. Emile Coué with his profound bosh about conscious auto-suggestion. M. Coué thus as a mental and philosophical aphrodisiac succeeds to the throne of the boob pill merchant who immediately preceded him: Sir Arthur Conan Doyle of spook fame. Each of these new jay-ticklers lasts for a year or two, and then gives way to another. A few of them, in truth, are men of merit—Freud, for example—but the booboisie does not distinguish between the good and bad. Kneipp, Schlatter, Tingley, Eusapia Palladino, Montessori, Ben Lindsey, Mary Baker Eddy, Augusta Stetson, Freud, Rabindranath Tagore, Bergson, Cocteau, Pelman, Doyle, Coué—they succeed each other in dizzy order, with the yokels indiscriminately swallowing as fast as if in a pie-eating contest. Osteopathy gives way to chiropractic, Fletcherism to Yogi breathing, psychoanalysis to auto-suggestion. Doyle feels the yaps losing interest in ghosts and proceeds to assure them that he has seen fairies. The boobs bite at Futurism, spit it out, swallow Cubism, spit it out, and turn for the time being to a chew of Da-daism. And so it goes. Barnum was only half right. There are two born every minute.

§ 2

American Journalistic Criticism.—The trouble with the majority of American newspaper critics of drama and literature is that, while they know *what*

they like, they don't know *why* they like it.

§ 3

Human Progress.—The whole Liberal scheme of things is based upon the theory that it is possible to improve humanity by passing laws. This is quite absurd. The only feasible way to improve humanity is to kill men.

§ 4

Gadding About.—The greatest of all human follies, it may be plausibly (though perhaps not convincingly) argued, is traveling, especially in Europe. Imagine the discomforts that even the richest traveler must put up with on the ocean voyage, and then imagine how little he gets for his money! Say he goes to London. Surely by this time even the children of peasants in Arkansas and Nebraska must be well aware that all save one-tenth of one percent. of London looks precisely like the poorer neighborhoods of St. Louis and Providence, R. I., and that the remaining portion, save for half a dozen ancient edifices, is not worth seeing. If a public pleasure-ground one-half so mangy as the Green Park were maintained in Buffalo, N. Y., the populace would burn down the City Hall. Moreover, seeing even such meagre sights as the town boasts is intensely difficult and uncomfortable. There is no adequate street-car service, the buses are primitive and dirty, and the Underground is run so absurdly that not even a born Londoner is ever sure, when he boards a train, where it will land him.

No expresses are run: to go five miles takes half an hour. Turn now to the hotels. One of the leading hotels in London, heavily patronized by Americans, is so clumsily designed that one must mount to a mezzanine floor to reach an elevator—and once aboard, one discovers to one's amazement that it does not run to the top of the hotel at all, but stops a floor short of the top. Such an elevator is simply a swindle. It disgraces the whole race of elevators, as a cornetist with insufficient wind disgraces the whole race of musicians.

I mention London, not because it is the worst city in Europe, but because, in many respects, it is the best. The traveling American can at least understand the language spoken by its inhabitants—at all events, that of the more literate minority—and so he can carry on the transactions of every day without much difficulty. But on the Continent he is usually quite helpless—and the native, quickly discovering the fact, falls upon him with the hearty, jovial air of a cat happening upon a rheumatic rat. I defy any American to say that he has ever made a journey of so much as 100 miles on the Continent without being short-changed. More, I defy him to say that he has ever spent so much as 24 hours in any Continental city without suffering horribly from the lack of some ordinary American comfort or convenience. The windows in Europe do not let in light at the angle to which Americans are accustomed; the faucets in the bathrooms squirt water in a strange and disconcerting manner; the heating arrangements seem more suitable for blast furnaces or golf links than for human habitations; the drinking water tastes of chemicals; the quilts on the beds are too thick and too short; the writing paper blots; the theatre seats sprain the *gluteus maximus* and produce a crick in the small of the back; even the carpets on the floor incommode the feet.

To enjoy such delights American tourists pour out their gold. And coming home, they denounce the Republic!

§ 5

No. 3,123.—A man, winning the favor of the gal of his choice, congratulates himself on the success of his technique, the while the gal, who has already made up her mind long before the aforesaid technique ever got into action, sits back and quietly treats herself to a juicy snicker.

§ 6

Publishers' English.—Sweet tit-bits from G. P. Putnam's Sons' circular offering "Putnam's Handy Map Book":

1. "Do you remember how, when you were a child, you used to lie on your elbows on the floor scanning the family Atlas? You were interested in maps then, and you have the same interest in them now, but like most such people, you don't use them as much as you would wish."

2. "You need no time in which to use it (Putnam's Handy Map Book). It is almost instantaneous."

3. "You would be amazed if you should examine Putnam's Handy Map Book to find . . ."

4. "By the use of a clever device the maps are the same size and on the same scale as would ordinarily be found in a similar book with a page twice as large."

5. ". . . people who realize the value of familiarity with, and frequent consultation of, an up to date set of maps."

6. "Constant references in books, magazines and daily and weekly papers to history-making events, dealing with state or national or international affairs make some such book of references ready at hand for instant consultation."

§ 7

Gay Parce.—Quoting the Special Paris Correspondence to the New York Herald of September 30th:

Americans who have registered at the Paris hotels this week are the following: Mr. and Mrs. Harry Dreyfus, Mrs. G. Augusta Cohen, M. S. Gerald Cohen, Mrs. Morris Meyer, Dr. and Mrs. Alfred Wiener, Miss S. Wiener, N. S. Kupfsky, I. Rosenthal, wife and children, Asher Solomon, Mr. and Mrs. Morris Kohlberg, Samuel Greenblatt, Mr. and Mrs. Sigmund Baer, Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Goldschmidt, Rabbi Louis P. Garfunkel, Henry Goldfarb and wife, Montague Levy, Jascha Blumenthal and party, Herman

Einstein, Herman Einstein, Jr., Fanny Einstein and Joseph Stevens Einstein, Mr. and Mrs. Louis K. Weil, Mr. and Mrs. Sam I. Gelbfleisch, Irving Schulman and party, Mrs. J. Kahn, Mr. and Mrs. Simon Rosenberg, Jay Irwin Rosenberg and Ida Rosenberg, Arthur St. Clair Cohn, Joseph Edelstein, Emil Nussbaum and party, Myer Hochstadter, Abraham Levine, Isidore Greenvogel and Isadore Greenvogel, Jr., Max P. Feuerstein, E. Fertig, Sol Bimberg and wife, Harry Arthur Beinhauer, Morris Feinberg and party, Leopold Abrams and Mrs. Leopold Abrams, J. Schornstein, Mr. and Mrs. A. Blaumwitz, S. Rosen, Milton Neugass, wife and children, Irving Ginsberg, Samuel Radowsky, Stanley Feigenbaum, Ben Hirsch and party, Hyman Goldberg, Minna Goldberg and Monroe Goldberg, Emanuel Lieberman, Barnet Lichtenstein, Mr. and Mrs. David Mogelesky, Siegfried Moses, Henry I. Perlman, wife and children, Jacob Rindsfoos, Morris Soltmann, I. Bennett Kahn, Murry Shomstein and party, Ray Samuelsohn, Bernard Lubin, S. Kovitz, Mr. and Mrs. Louis Buxbaum, Harold S. Straus, Sidney Marcus, Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Goldfish, C. Gerstenhaber, Benjamin Klein and party, Captain and Mrs. Moritz Edelstein, Mortimer Grimstein, Robert Wendell Seligman, Julius Binzwanger and party, Mrs. Godfrey Rothschild, Godfrey Rothschild, Jr., Bessie and Leah Rothschild, and Mrs. Hyman O. Rothschild, A. Glickman and party, Aaron Feldman, Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Gundweiler, Pershing Gundweiler and maid, Lionel Wertheimer, Jesse Kalbfleisch and party, B. Cantor, E. Kohn and party, Percy Eichhorn, Irving Schoenberg and Mrs. Schoenberg, the Misses Mae, Sarah and Bella Krauskopf, J. Penryhn Mandelbaum, Barney Siegelman, Mr. and Mrs. Sig. Elias and party, Mr. and Mrs. David Lazarus, David Lazarus, Jr., and Condé Lazarus, Hattie Buchsbinder, Mr. and Mrs. Mort. J. Hechheimer, Werner I. Kohn, Milton Gimbel and party, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Goldfarb and Master Vincent Astor Goldfarb, Dave Dittenhofer, the Misses Stella, Florrie and Celia Kirschbaum, Edmund J. Arnstine, Mr. and Mrs. I. Berg Davidow, Maurice Lifshitz and party of six, Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Baumberg, Leo Yawolinsky, J. Rubin, Benedict Katz, Mr. and Mrs. Irving Marowitz, the Misses Reba and Simone Margolies, Marks P. Herzberg, the Misses Selma and Lilyan Ginberg, Abraham Parker Kaplan, Moe Ehrman and party, Mr. and Mrs. Felix Bornschein, Master J. Devereaux Bohnschein, the Misses Nettie and Amanda Bornschein and two maids, Gabriel Rafsky, Albert Stern, Myron C. Dantziger, Mr. and Mrs. Herman A. Tannenbaum, Gilbert Lubin, Victor Lamstein, Saul D. Nudelman, Mr. and Mrs. Ferd Ganz, Daniel Mannheimer and party of four, Mr. and Mrs. Mark A. Oestreicher, Edwin F. Susskind and party, Mr. and Mrs. Wolf Rabitcheff, Harris

Sachs, Herb Pincus, Mr. and Mrs. Monte Jonas, Master Harry Jonas, Miss Meta Jonas and maid, Jerome Deutsch, Adolph Hurwitz, Alvin R. Mintz, Meyer Rothstein and party, Emil Schlossberg, Leon Isaacson, Oscar B. Neumann, Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Guggenheimer, Mr. and Mrs. Lou Simon, the Misses Ada and Beatrice Reinheimer, Howard Bernstein, Arnim Nussdorf and party, Mr. and Mrs. A. Epstein, Mr. and Mrs. Max Fishel, Harvey Shapiro, Eli P. Kalisch, Benj. A. Frankel, Shep Frankel, Alex Frankel, Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Mendelsohn, Isidore Moss, Harvey Weinberg, and William K. Vanderbilt, Jr.

§ 8

Divine Virtuosity.—In no field does God work in a more mysterious and facile way, His wonders to perform, than in that of human plastic, or, as they say, physiognomy. I once knew a man who was, in head and face, the exact duplicate of the late Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche. He had precisely the same piercing eyes, the same Niagara of a moustache, the same watermelon brow, the same bellicose glare. He was the superintendent of a Methodist Sunday-school in a provincial town. . . . You think I lie? Unquestionably it seems probable. I therefore append his name and address. He was Thomas Gordon Hayes, and the scene of his theological endeavors was a house of worship on Edmonson avenue, Baltimore, opposite Harlem square.

§ 9

Dodo Note.—I met a girl the other evening who had a habit of following a periodic mood of excitement with a sudden pensive silence. It was very effective.

§ 10

Gertrude Atherton, Critic.—From an advertisement of Avery Hopwood's proud opus, "Why Men Leave Home," in the New York newspapers:

Gertrude Atherton says, "If Mr. Hopwood weren't still young, I'd say he never could write anything better. At all events, if he doesn't, *no one else will.*"

§ 11

Champions.—Champion billiard player of the world . . . Champion bicyclist of the world . . . Champion pie-eater of the world . . . Champion woman typist of the world . . . World's champion swimmer under water . . . World's champion father—32 children . . . Champion indoor gymnast of the world . . . Champion verbena grower of the world . . . World's champion chess player . . . Champion hog-butcher of the world . . . World's champion long distance walker . . . Champion memory expert of the world . . . Champion lightning mathematician of the world . . . World's champion doughnut maker . . . Champion roller skater of the world . . . Champion equilibrist of the world . . . World's champion fly-weight prize-fighter . . . Champion speller of the world . . . World's champion fat man . . . World's champion whistler . . . Champion barber of the world . . . World's champion pea-shucker . . . Champion faster of the world . . . World's champion trick dachshund . . .

§ 12

Honor.—We Americans, too, have our national code of honor. One of its paragraphs prohibits telling on a woman who has sensitive and athletic brothers. Another forbids making a moral or patriotic attack upon a man who can strike back.

§ 13

The Devotee in Politics.—The worst curse of politics, particularly under democracy, is faith. The man who believes in parties, leaders, principles: such a fellow is simply political cannon-fodder. What the Republic needs, above all, is cynics. . . . Well, let us not despair. Every time another article of faith is put to the test it gets another battalion of them.

§ 14

Once Again.—A woman, once she is married herself, tries to snare a hus-

band for her sister. A man, once he is snared, takes his brother behind the door and warns him.

§ 15

Sailing! Sailing!—I contrive and polish these austere lines in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, four days out from a damp, dull and sordid seaport. My shallop is one of the vast and gaudy craft that now degrade all the oceans of the world to the uses of an aimless restlessness, a hollow and unintelligible curiosity. My fellow voyagers, with a few amiable and charming exceptions, are vegetables. Their notion of conversation is to complain bitterly about their hotel bills in Berlin and Paris, to debate endlessly the freshness of the eggs at table, to drive the stewards frantic with demands as to the exact hour of our arrival next Friday. It is their theory that the ocean voyage is pleasant, that it is doing them good. That theory leaves me in doubt. Is there, in fact, any sense in it whatsoever? If so, what are the evidences?

I search for them in vain. To me, though I am what is called a good sailor, a trip on any ocean craft, however large and luxurious, almost touches the extreme limits of the disagreeable. To live for a week or more in a small and inconvenient room—to walk up and down a narrow runway, confronted eternally by women with green faces and men snoring obscenely—to run short unexpectedly of socks, undershirts, shirts, drawers, with no laundry aboard—to dress up in the evening like the croupiers at Monte Carlo, and dine depressingly upon stale food elaborately cooked—to sit thereafter for hour after hour in a chilly, draughty smoke-room, gradually drugging one's self to sleep—certainly all this is far from an ideal life for one of God's creatures, made in His image. How long and dismal the days are at sea—for a passenger! How gray and greasy the water! What varieties of fresh paint, oil, slime, gum, tar, pitch, filth of all sorts exist! What hats the women wear! How many chil-

children, dogs, bores! Is it agreeable thus to plow the hostile and sardonic main: a stimulating adventure? Then it is also a stimulating adventure to sit through the seven days of a rural chautauqua in Iowa or Mississippi.

The modern ship architect, like his brother of the land, aims at an elaborate and childish deception, deceiving no one. Portholes, for example, have vanished from the dining-rooms of the big ships: in place of them one observes so-called windows, with panes of glass ostentatious square and fragile. The theory appears to be that the passenger who has paid \$300 or \$400 to sit in the dining-room is unaware that the same old portholes are concealed behind the curtains of the windows—in brief, that he fully believes, gaping at the walls, that he is not in a ship at sea, but in some cabaret founded upon a rock. Put this theory with the other! Engrave both upon a monument to human folly! Add a note about the flowers growing in pots and troughs in the combination dance-hall, parlor, arena of amour and convalescent home for old ladies getting over *mal de mer*. And another about the canary-birds in cages. Who

is genuinely bamboozled by such puerile hocus-pocus? Why not make a ship look like a ship, and have done?

§ 16

Reverie Pianissimo.—The double standard of morality will survive in this vale so long as a woman whose husband has been seduced is favored with the sympathetic tears of other women, and a man whose wife has run amok is laughed at by other men.

§ 17

The Bozart.—The doctrine that art is an imitation of nature is more often than not fallacious. Nine-tenths of all the art that one encounters in this world is actually an imitation of other art. Fully a half of it is an imitation twice, thrice or ten times removed. The artist, in fact, is seldom an accurate observer of nature: he leaves that gross and often revolting exploration to geologists, engineers and anatomists. What interests him is not the thing-in-itself, but an ideal that conceals it. The last thing he wants to see is a beautiful woman in the bright, pitiless sunlight.



Query

By M. G. Sabel

DARIUS, Xerxes, Geiseric,
Attila, Hannibal, Miltiades,
Cæsar, Alexander, Napoleon,
Lee, Allenby, Foch—
Tell me
By what manner of means
May one invade the country of a young girl's heart
And conquer it?



The Master Mind

By Dashiell Hammett

WHEREVER crime or criminals were discussed by enlightened folk, the name of Waldron Honeywell could be heard. It was a symbol—to the citizens of Punta Arenas no less than to those of Tamerfors—for the ultimate in the prevention and detection of crime. A native of the United States, Honeywell's work had overflowed the national boundaries. Thirty years of warfare upon crime had taken him into every quarter of the globe, and his fame into every nook where the printed word penetrated.

Bringing to his work a singularly perspicacious intellect, and combining an exhaustive knowledge of both the scientific and more practical phases of his profession, he had reduced it to as nearly exact a science as possible; and his supremacy in his field had never been questioned.

He had punctured Lombroso's theories at a time when the scientific world regarded the Italian as a Messiah. The treatise with which he exploded the belief—fostered by no less an authority than the great W. J. Burns—that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle would have made a successful detective, and showed that the mysteries confronting Sherlock Holmes would have been susceptible to the routine methods of the ordinary policeman, was familiar to the readers

of eight languages. The mastery with which he unearthed and frustrated the Versailles bomb plot before it was well on its feet; the dispatch with which he recovered the aircraft program memoranda; his success in finding the assassin of the emperor of Abyssinia, the details of which were suppressed for some obscure political reason; the effectual manner in which he coped with the epidemic of postal robberies—these were matters of history, but in no way more remarkable than a thousand-odd other exploits in which he had figured.

Honors and decorations were showered upon him, governments sought his advice, scientists deferred to him, criminals shuddered at the sound of his name (one, who had avoided arrest for seventeen years, surrendered to the nearest policeman upon learning that Honeywell had been engaged to hunt him down), and his monetary rewards were enormous.

Early in 1922 Waldron Honeywell died, and left an estate consisting of \$182.65 in cash, 37,500 shares of International Solar Power Corporation common, 42,555 shares of Cousin Tilly Gold, Platinum & Diamond Mining Company common, 6,430 shares of Universal Petroleum Corporation of Uruguay, S. A. preferred, and 75,000 shares of New Era Fuelless Motor Company common.



Romance

By Lady Dorothy Kennard

I

SIXTY miles an hour over the switchback of wood and plough, sunlight and shadow, which is Northern France: Veronica held the white Rolls to the whiter roads, as she might have done the sun-chariot of mythology, while Arnold Stone, her husband, sat beside her, immersed in thoughts of which but one is pertinent:

She belonged to him now. He had won her . . . broken in forty-eight hours the independence that had held her determinedly distant throughout the years that he had known her. That ceremony at the Embassy in Paris, curt words, briefly spoken, had accomplished what a whole life-time of service might never have done: Veronica Thorn, well known of many, incognito in her intimacies even to the few, elusive bird of passage over many lands yet stranger in her own, had capitulated quite simply, unexpectedly and suddenly to his most mediocre self.

Meanwhile Veronica dreamed the past.

"Do you realize that we are on our honeymoon?" he asked her as a signpost flashed by and pointed "A—"

"Some things are quite unrealizable!" she replied.

"And that it was on this day and almost at this hour last week that you refused me, definitely, and for the very last time?"

She signed assent and stiffened slightly as his arm, which had been hovering, stole round her.

Up there, on the high rocks of A—,

was where Pierre first had told her that her eyes could soften—young eyes that seemed cold and clear merely because they had not yet seen things in life to turn them hard.

"That was the day I ordered our rooms at Deauville," Stone announced complacently, "because I knew that the moment was very near when you would come."

"You had always proposed to me as a sort of pastime," she objected, "it was the first time that you made it sound sincere." She turned to smile at him, for he had demonstrated conclusively, in his last blatant statement, that he had exercised over her man's birthright, which is to manage the woman of his choosing by her spirit of contradiction. "I am still wondering why you did it. Because you are not in love with me, you know."

The man's silence feigned affirmation. His wife of several hours continued dispassionately:

"If I had known you planned for Deauville, it would have been the one place in the world to which I should have declined to come."

"Why? Just because I want a conventional honeymoon to make up for an unconventional engagement?"

"Arnold!" (her voice was purposeful). "We are now probably going to be married for a long time. Learn one simple lesson at the outset: never ask my reasons for doing or saying anything at all. I never have any."

(It was just here, where four cross-roads formed a rond-point that first she had learned the phrase from

Pierre. It had served Pierre very well.)

They were passing a farm-house now: one of the kind that merges black bricks into blacker stone-coping, austere and grim as is most masonry of village France where no small gardens grow. Two guinea fowl were strutting slowly, dark dots on dust, to cross the road. They fluttered . . . died.

"You killed both!" he reproached her as the speedometer leaped to sixty-five. Then, as if following out a train of thought, "Somehow it has always been your ruthlessness that has drawn me until the moment came when I could no longer keep away."

He pressed her to him with his hidden arm. The car gave a vicious swerve:

"Don't do that!" With her free hand she disengaged herself. "At this pace you might have killed us both!"

"Sorry. I'll behave." He settled into his corner, unruffled and obedient.

"After all, it would be a pity to die just as we were starting off on something new!" Stone did not answer and Veronica persisted teasingly—"You would have minded?"

(Even so, often and lightly, had she and that other spoken of death while learning love of living. But Pierre had wanted to go out . . . like that, swiftly, uproariously, together.)

"Well, what do you think? I didn't marry you to die with! Not yet awhile, at any rate."

She did not speak her thought which was: "At least you might have said you had, because it would have sounded well."

Instead she remained silent, and her profile might have been carved in marble against the rushing green.

"I really don't like skids," her husband informed her when, some few minutes later, they quickened pace to shave another corner. "Please dear, I beg of you—there's no hurry—not again!"

Not again, certainly! There were no more little woods like that one, where had grown wild strawberries and the white orchids Pierre had loved. Not on this bit of road, anyway. Perhaps—further on?

"Their woodcraft is puerile in these districts!" Stone's interests, at home, were all in timber and he was in his element. "Look at that undergrowth! They don't practise the first principles of forestry."

"You are perfectly right!" she assented with her lips, but in her heart she murmured. "No, because they understand the sweet scent of foliage at riot, which is worth to them all the money in the world." Then, aloud—"Yet it pays them very well."

"How do you know?" asked her husband in quick surprise. "Who are *they* anyhow?"

"Owners of land in France." Her drawl was deliberate. "Most of the proprietors in this district are rich and quite content with their own methods."

It was dangerous ground, but Pierre had been proud of all his wooded land and her spoken words were tribute to him in thought.

"You have lived here?" He swept the landscape vaguely.

She slowed the car almost to a standstill on the upcurve of a rise and in her eyes were reflected all the greens and mauves of the horizon. When she spoke the words floated out dreamily over misted valleys:

"Once, yes." She freed the engine and the car gathered momentum downward: "But so long ago that I have forgotten."

Echo from the shade whither they plunged seemed to call mockingly:

"This much at least, my Veronique, whatever else there is that Life may bring you, you have lived with me hours that you will never be able to forget!"

"Dear God, help me not to remember!" she prayed to herself almost hysterically, for, down here, just beyond that rugged crucifix, was a

gorge where they had paddled, where Pierre had played with pebbles and tried to dam the stream.

Then aloud:

"And you? Do you know nothing of the country beyond the Calais-Paris road?"

"I have passed through it," was his brief reply.

Water splashed cheerfully, from the streamlet that spanned the road, and laid their dust.

"Jolly little place that!" Stone turned to sniff damp leaf mould appreciatively, then back to his wife whose gaze appeared mesmerized over the steering wheel: "You missed it! Honestly, it's a pity not to drive slower through these bits of view."

"If we can reach Caen by one o'clock we shall have done a record," she informed him. "That's worth a lot of scenery."

The man looked doubtful and was to feel more so during the ensuing hour, for his wife and the car excelled themselves.

Both the woman and the machine she drove became sympathetically inspired. The Rolls no longer bumped or skidded, it merely flew, and drove proudly into the town which was their objective nearly fifteen minutes ahead of any conceivable allowance of time.

"Phew!" exclaimed Stone as he divested himself of his dustcoat in the hotel yard, "I'm glad that's over!"

He wiped grime from his features, small insects from the corners of his eyes.

"Sweetheart, you must be dead."

"Merely dazed," she told him.

The unexpected endearment had startled, at the same time it pleased her and she added gently:

"But I have enjoyed the run."

II

LUNCH was a silent meal enlivened only by the volubility of an inn-keeper with an eye to the main chance who tried to sell them a villa. It was

Veronica who encouraged him, parried his tactics and finally routed the old intriguer altogether, while her husband listened and wondered, for the twentieth time that day, why she had ever consented to marry him.

His wife could have told him, after the coffee, had intuition prompted him to ask her. There had descended upon her the lassitude that is born of emotional reaction: she longed to lay her head upon his shoulder, talk, be comforted and cry. Not because she loved him, but because she loved no one now, and had found it out today.

An exaggerated sentimentality, such as loneliness nurtures in the hearts of women, had driven her to label the radiant pattern that Pierre had woven into the morning of her life as tragedy, rather than interlude. Today's unlooked for pilgrimage into remembered country had enabled her to discern a pointing finger of the Future, which erased from her environment all the false glamor of the first lover's personality while it accentuated the depth and the seduction of a first love's atmosphere. She had known Arnold for eight years and longer, throughout which period he had invariably proved himself a healing reflector of her varying moods. Today for the first time, she felt that she could have told him what she was really like, and what had really been her past . . . confessed that she was very ordinary and womanly and weak, that she welcomed his strong square shoulders, revered what she considered as his simple mind, that he had stirred her just because he stood less for romance than for protection: the quality in a husband that any woman over thirty craves.

But stone missed his opportunity which had arrived with the liqueurs. Veronica had made their placing at his end of the table her excuse for moving voluntarily closer, as a hint that his hour had come. Arnold affected to see only Cordial Medoc, a flavor to be renewed in substance

now after having been held in remembrance for many years, and drew, in reaching for the bottle, an immeasurable distance away.

The woman stood up abruptly:

"Hurry up!" At his surprised look she continued peremptorily: "Don't sip it! We must be getting on."

He protested, contrasting existent peace and quietude with the glare of early afternoon.

"No, Arnold, I must get out of here. It's stuffy and dark and I feel stifled. I like to be on the move."

She led the way. In the courtyard of the Inn he caught her up and asked abruptly:

"Look here, did you mean what you said about Deauville? Because if you'd really rather not go there, we can catch the first train back to Paris. I only chose the place because I remembered it as pleasant and hoped you might find it so."

He sounded diffident, anxious, kind. Veronica knew sudden compunction—it was quite natural that Arnold Stone should have remembered Dives, Deauville, the emerald coastline and the lovers' paradise which is Normandy as—just that—pleasant. He had that kind of mind.

"Don't be silly," she said gently. "I'm only tired."

She sat quite still for a moment when she resumed her place at the wheel and made no attempt to start the car. And Stone sat silent too, beside her, content that to wait thus should be her whim.

Then she challenged him suddenly, almost involuntarily:

"Aren't you ever going to try and find out something about me? Do you realize that we are strangers now, in our new role, you and I?"

"Didn't you tell me not to inquire after reasons?" he counter-questioned.

She shrugged her shoulders impatiently:

"Reasons! It's the unreasoning part of me that men have loved!" She studied him surreptitiously to

note whether the shaft had gone home.

"Men, perhaps." His tone was entirely dispassionate. "But you see, they were the ones you never married. There will be time enough for me to discover for myself the you I have the right to know."

The manner in which she released the clutch and jerked the gears was unprofessional and feminine, suggesting temper. He smiled discreetly, for it was the first time he had been given the impression that there was a woman at the wheel.

"Would you like me to drive now?" he suggested softly. "I have driven a Rolls."

Her answer was deliberately provocative:

"I promised the man who gave it to me that no one should ever drive this car but me."

"Then I am glad to learn of you, as my first lesson, that you know how to keep your word," he answered, and scored, as he had meant to do.

When Veronica turned to smile at him a few seconds later, Arnold appeared to be asleep.

She studied him, lazily ensconced, intensely virile, healthy and happy, presumably at peace. She knew him very little, this man of forty-three with a whole life of his own behind him and hers in his hands ahead. She wondered what it would be like to know him as a lover, him of whom she had always been so sure as a friend. And, with the thought, there enveloped her a sort of icy mantle of affronted chastity which had always fallen between herself and any other man who had threatened to cross the barrier that had been raised by Pierre.

"But Pierre is over—over—over!" she told herself fiercely. "And he shall not revive!"

Not only over, but the struggle had ended years ago. The hurt of it was healed, the scar obliterated. It had only pricked today because of an environment that was so intimately

associated with the first lover, with the yearning that is in every woman for her youth.

This well-remembered run from Cannes to Deauville was going to be the worst of it! She clenched her teeth in the actual physical effort of telling herself that it was the lost romance for which her being clamored, not the forgotten and, by this time, forgetful man. And, as sunlight flirted with shadow over each poignantly accusing landmark that flashed by in its remembered sequence, she told herself that they must be all realized only as marking the frontiers of a future that belonged to Arnold . . . to nice, safe, old Arnold, come into his own today. She felt tender toward him and rather proud . . . less of him than of herself for having at last capitulated to the inevitable.

"You need someone strong and at the same time stupid, who will value you for all the depth and knowledge you have gained from loving me. Some day you will find him and you will be glad that I went away; and your resentment will turn to gratitude in thought."

Those had been Pierre's last words when he had left her life as carelessly as he had entered it. Today it would seem as if they had come true.

Then she awoke to the fact that her bitterest hour was upon her; general outlines were growing, with every kilometer, more definitely familiar. In choosing the coast road she had forgotten that, unavoidably, around some leafy corner, she would have to face it, suffer it, and pass it by; the worm-eaten, welcoming threshold of a hostelry called "Guillaume le Conquerant."

Veronica knew sudden panic. She drew the car to a standstill and gazed wildly about her in unreasoning revolt from the ordeal. For she knew as definitely as if some planning fate had spoken that she must not only visit that hostelry upon this day of

reminiscence, but that she must visit there alone.

There had fallen upon the wooded world around her, with the stoppage of the Rolls' engine, the whispering silence of midsummer afternoon. Veronica, her husband and the chauffeur, who dozed in the tonneau, alone appeared vibrant in an environment of suspended activity concentrating upon the prolongment of Nature's happy dream.

"We are not going any farther for the moment." Stone spoke the words most firmly. "You look tired out. I'm going to make a bed for you with rugs and things. Then, while you rest, I've got a job to do."

She stared at him, but half-comprehending, her thoughts all jumbled in their maze.

"I thought . . ."

He interrupted quickly—

"Oh, I've been awake some time. I didn't want to miss this bit of road."

He was looking out at the sea, through trees beyond her. An outsider, listening, would have noticed that his voice had altered, deepened, aged.

"Dives never changes," he added almost under his breath.

Impulsively, the words: "You love it too?" just forming on her lips, his wife turned to him, but he had already broken the forming current of sympathy, for—

"I particularly wanted to stop here today. It's a chance of looking over those factories which may not occur again," he continued, indicating the suburbs of Caen, which had already dropped behind.

She glanced indifferently at five tall chimneys that towered over smoke-clouds in the distance, then at the man—

"As you like. The halt sounds tempting. But yours is a curious fashion of choosing to spend a lovely afternoon."

He smiled faintly, and busied himself, without answering, about her comfort, shifting rugs, cushions and

various adjuncts about the base of a flowering tree.

"There!" was his next remark as, stepping backward, he turned to help her out of the car. "You ought to be quite comfortable. I'll take the car and be back within the hour. You'll wait here?"

Something over-anxious in his manner held Veronica for an instant longer to the immediate present.

"Of course! It's lovely and peaceful," she smiled up at him from greenery that framed her head. "It was a good idea of yours." Then sank against her tree-trunk to drift deliberately, voluptuously into the past.

She would give him five minutes, allow the dust-clouds from the wheels of the departing motor time to curl and settle and then . . . three curves of the winding highroad, a bench straddled across the green oasis of a tiny turf niche, and the aperture of beams and clambering roses which had spelt for William the Conqueror and a myriad other rovers a passing travesty of home!

Within a quarter of an hour she had found them all.

III

ABOUT this hostelry no single thing had altered since the June day, now ten years dead, that had marked the arrival of herself and Pierre. In our material world it is only the legitimately tended homesteads that are subject to changes consequent to the normal development of the human beings that thrive under their roofs. It is reserved as privilege unto the carelessly constructed shelter for transitory lovers to catch and hold glamor as immortal, disguising with love's illusions the mediocre craftsmanship that shields their halcyon hours.

The hotel was of brown match-wood held into tottering stability by clambering vines. Their flowering shed riot of crimson triumphant in gaudiness; the resulting Swiss chalet

effect was undeniably garish but, just because it was also eternally cheerful, sublime.

As she traversed the worn flagstones of an alley that led into an inner courtyard (which stones struck the only note of sombreness and dignity amid the abandoned whole), Veronica understood the folly of her venture. The proprietors of this inn would certainly remember, ask questions, talk. Ten years is not a lifetime and Pierre was probably still a well-known local figure-head.

"For he will have brought many women since!" she reminded herself defiantly, wondering that her own certitude of this should give so little pain.

It was astounding, but the place was empty! There obtruded neither host nor rival guest, nor sounds of human life. Even the white dog of equivocal parentage and mongrel habits, who had been wont to clamor at every passing footstep, was nowhere to be seen.

"But he is dead, of course," whispered Veronica, "as must be all the animals we knew."

She made her way toward a little arbor, stepping lightly, afraid to break the spell of still enchantment that subdued the very breezes and shrank into a corner screened by clematis, trying to pretend that she herself was not really there.

It was the nook where they had dined, she and Pierre, on their first evening, and had chosen to hold it sacred ever after as a sort of shrine. . . .

"If one could but keep all the happenings of life at their beginnings and never touch an apex . . . why then one would never find an end," had been Pierre's favorite maxim. He had spoken it often, invariably with a shout of laughter at the absurdity of his own platitude.

"Not only did we seek an apex, but we touched it far too soon!" murmured the watcher at the shrine today.

She sat a full ten minutes longer before she dared accept the fact that, by some freak of fortune, she and the past had really been left alone. Then ventured forth to institute a systematic tourney of the hostelry. The spirit in which she probed surprised herself; this orgy of mobilized sentiment was not suffering, only a revel of emotion around her own regrets.

A subconscious sense of time warned her that she must not linger in the lower purlieus any longer. Around the smallest of three courtyards a balcony circumferenced its upper story, where were three bedrooms. One, most particularly, clamored to be visited. The curving stairs that broached them proved bitter going, for she had never trodden those steps before. Pierre had always been proud to carry her, vaunting his strength that held sufficiently for two when, after some all-day excursion, hers had tired.

She passed so lightly over the wooden flooring of the veranda that no footfall echoed to destroy her vivid impression of the wraith-like nature of her coming. A feeling that she was guilty of unhallowed trespass strengthened every instant as she fumbled with a well-remembered door-knob of preposterously painted china. It would prove awkward, to say the least of it, were she to find the bed-room occupied!

But it was empty . . . waiting. A blaze of sunshine enveloped her as the door opened slowly inward, flooding from a crooked window, mulioned in adulterated glass, that fronted on to the sea. Behind her, down in the quiet garden, a sudden draught rushed creepers and leaves. It was as if they sighed in sympathy with the yearning that swept over her whole being as she surveyed the room. Here, for the first time, she missed him, the man and his vitality, disintegrated in her thought from his dead love's atmosphere.

Instinctively she turned toward the bed where always, at this hour, he

had been wont to lie, stretched at his ease, his bright hair ruffled, chin on hand, dreaming out over the Cote d'Emeraude. Those had been the hours of his companionship that formed her most, for it had been at such times he built up absurd philosophies only to refute them again in joyous mocking when he had appreciated the fervor with which she molded all thought and feeling under his guiding spell.

Pierre the playmate . . . Pierre the lover . . . Pierre the traducer, even, how she had loved them all!

There are men like that, men who were always careless children, wielding their charm and influence to one unstable service only, which is the harvesting of sacrificial tribute for the altars of their great god Pan. It is the making of any women to meet (provided that she part) with one.

Veronica knew no remorse. Had she refused herself to him when he wanted her, he would merely have strayed on, past her, preferring to lose her, one of the many, than to lose his unique freedom and taste regret.

He must have aged and coarsened, she reflected. She wondered how life would have appeared to her today had they ever married. Then flayed herself, for the hundredth time, in spirit in the bitter certitude that any idea of permanency in their relationship would merely have spelled broad farce to Pierre. Why he would never have stayed with her so long as he had done had he suspected that she even planned fitfully to hold him longer! Veronica knew only too well that it was not climax . . . just boredom that had made him go.

She leaned out over the window-sill breathing in the whole scented environment in a last good-bye. This stolen hour of retrospect had brought its lesson; henceforward there should be no more looking back.

After all, at thirty-five life was not over! And perhaps, in some such sensuous temple of love's illusions,

ten years ago when he was younger, even Arnold . . . no, the thought was too preposterous! She could not picture Arnold here!

At that instant she heard his voice, resonant, unmistakable, engaged in converse with somebody below.

She never doubted that he had come in search of her and, in her consternation, did not pause to wonder how it was that she should have been so swiftly found.

She closed the casement firmly and made toward the door. Her movements would be quite easily explainable, she had got bored, out there, and wandered on to see what she could find. In a way the interruption was welcome, for that sound of voices had dispelled the cloying, saddened unreality of this drugged Paradise.

The other voice was nasal, French, familiar. Veronica smiled to think how inevitably there had resuscitated in the world, at Arnold's coming, the normal life of every day. She supposed that the inn-keeper had been about all the time, then?

"Ah, Monsieur Stone, *comme cela fait plaisir de revoir les clients! On les reconnaît toujours, malgré le temps qui passe . . .*"

Veronica started and halted on the threshold of the bedroom's door. Her husband's French, though ponderous in volume, was indistinguishable in its meaning at a distance.

"*Comment! Monsieur ne descend pas chez nous?*" The host's voice sounded reproachful.

Then, more confidently, it continued:

"*Je comprends, Monsieur est seul. Ce sera pour une autre fois alors?*"

Subsequent colloquy was muffled and of considerable duration. The listener strained every faculty to hear but only the last words were audible.

"Thank you, I will go up alone," said Arnold, in English.

And Veronica heard one set of footsteps shuffle away. There was no opportunity to analyze the mys-

tery, a purposeful tread was already mounting the stairs.

Veronica slipped back into the bedroom and waited breathlessly behind the door ajar.

The balcony flooring creaked rhythmically, there was an instant of suspense when the newcomer paused at the top of the stairs, all the beams of the building quivered under three or four heavy strides on the veranda and reverberated in climax at the opening and closing of an adjoining door.

Then there fell a silence again, broken only by the hum of bees.

The woman who had married Stone that morning played eavesdropper for an incalculable space of time. Five minutes passed that might as well have been as many hours before the strain of her hand relaxed upon the door-knob, during which interval no sound of movement had obtruded from the next room. She crept out onto the landing thinking only to make her escape unseen back to the wood where Arnold obviously thought of her as waiting, and pull her scattered wits together there.

But an irresistible curiosity impelled her to pause on the mysterious threshold that had been Arnold's objective. She hesitated, realizing that it was not securely fastened, and all scruples gone to the winds, leaned to the line of light that filtered through the keyhole.

She had not been mistaken; her husband was there, kneeling beside an iron bedstead, his arms outflung over its cotton cover, his head sideways upon a pillow and facing to the sea.

Veronica straightened herself, and drifted down the staircase as noiselessly as she had come . . . out through the flickering shadows of those courtyards, under the scrolled coat of arms that crowned the main entrance, into the road of sun and dust that stretched in waiting and piloted her back to her resting-place under remembered trees.

There, twenty minutes later, Arnold found her, and apologized wholeheartedly for being a few seconds overdue.

"I made a detour," he informed her. "Those factories are not as near as they seem."

They drove on to Deauville and, presumably, into their life together. Out of this story at any rate. And

they are probably most contented wherever they may be today.

For the Fates that desire stability of marriage prefer that no human being should espouse, to mutual disillusionment, those other human beings who spelled romance. Such serve to prepare the way, that's all, and spread good atmosphere!



Affinity

By Leonora Speyer

*HER mouth was shaped to little tunes
That flying she let fall,
But when his silence mended them
She could not sing at all.*

*She could not fly without her tunes,
They were her only wings,
So now she walks the usual ways
Among sure-footed things.*

*She walks content, her hand in his,
But neither of them sings.*



AN optimist is one who notes how many of the good girls he knew have become bad. A pessimist one who notes how many of the bad girls he knew have become respectable.



HAPPINESS is something more than comfort and something less than ecstasy.



THE wise woman never cries. She merely threatens to cry.



Kingsborough

By Amanda Hall

AND have you come from Kingsborough,
The little sea-mewed town
Whose fields are fair and winsome,
Whose cliffs are clenched to frown?

Do crooked men in Kingsborough
Still walk with crooked canes
To Boar's Head Inn of evenings
Like spiders through the lanes?

Do women dried as herrings
Retail the news they know,
The gulls upon the headland
Descend like flakes of snow?

I mind the white washed chapel
Where the bridegroom met the bride,
And led her forthwith to the tune
Of his own piping pride.

The cat's tail grass in meadows
That some call Timothy,
The yarrow and the lupin
In fringes by the sea,

The nimble crabs that frittered
Along the naked shore,
The surf forever mocking
The sea-wife at her door,

Where roses pale and salty
Flung fragrance on the air,
The queer cry of the bittern
Was sharpened like despair!

Are childish hearts in Kingsborough
Still taught to work and play
Where laughter is a torment,
The saddest are the gay?

And virtue is a tartar
With a three-thonged scourge for sin—
Oh, do the proud ones ever
Speak of Aggie Flynn?

Heart to Heart

By Charles G. Shaw

I

ALL women are born actresses. The great mistake the majority of them make is in selecting the type of play for which they are best fitted.

II

THERE are three types of men who succeed with women: men who make them wonder, men who make them worry, and men who make them weep.

III

No woman feels so securely in love with one man that she does not keep an eye out for another one.

IV

IN the business of attracting men all women realize the vital value of beauty. A very beautiful woman can grab almost any man; a fairly beautiful woman's chances are extremely good, and so on down the scale. Hence, the unfortunate wren of unimposing mien usually snatches only the chaff of mankind, the bottom layer; in short, the type of man who admires female intelligence.

V

WHEN a woman says that she is sure of a man she means that she is sure of herself. When a man says that he is sure of a woman he is merely lying.

VI

ON the battlefield of love there are far fewer broken hearts than there are broken promises.

VII

THE lover speaks of eternity. The husband of the "dear old days."

VIII

MAN's greatest invention: that one's latest love differs from all the others

IX

IN the process of every *affaire d'amour* there are moments of Olympian height and of Plutonian depth; moments of ecstatic joy and of deadly depression. In retrospect, once the affair has terminated, these invariably assume a definite tendency to equalization. The crests of the wave decline; the troughs ascend. The memory of each becomes as level as a billiard table.

X

A WOMAN's tears are of three varieties: of tenderness, of regret, and of vengeance.

XI

ONLY a woman truly appreciates the colossal importance of contrast. Thus, in a drab setting she will appear in dazzling raiment, while before a background of glitter and splendor she realizes full well the worth of the plainest and simplest attire.

XII

A WOMAN praises a man for those qualities she knows he would like to possess; a man praises a woman for those qualities he knows she never will possess.

XIII

IN any affair of the heart the decision of the woman depends chiefly upon the indecision of the man.

XIV

A WOMAN hopes that all her love affairs will be real. A man hopes that all of his will be delightful.

XV

A POPULAR man: one who has many friends. A popular woman: one who has many enemies.

XVI

ASSUREDNESS on the part of the man

is the one factor that will either make or mutilate a romance.

XVII

It is by no means an infrequent case that the inconsequential fellow is the most successful one with women. This is feasibly explained by the fact that, while he fails to arouse, amuse or intrigue, he likewise fails to offend. His technique is wholly negative. And it is the absence of the note that jars that is essentially important to women. A thousand skilful manœuvres on the part of a man will not atone for one that is disagreeable to the woman.

XVIII

IN every woman there is a bit of snob and a bit of Cinderella.



Songs

By Leonard Hall

LORD BEAUTY has but little room
When days are two and two,
And never comes one flaming hour
To make a song for you.

But if I cannot fashion dreams
With paper and with pen,
I hear one lovely melody
Unheard by other men.

And so I very proudly go,
Remembering you wear
A song upon your dreaming eyes
That I have written there.



Dr. Puckett

By Parkhurst Whitney

I

THE village was a veritable reservoir out of which health and evangelical religion flowed to all parts of the world. Originally it had been exclusively a health resort of the Indians, and their trail down to the medicinal springs that bubbled out into the valley was an old one, well defined with pock-marked skulls and broken pottery. Then the white man came along, bringing civilization, including a tasty drink called rum and the nice new name of Main Street for the red man's highway. The Indian sampled these innovations, but they didn't seem to help him as much as the waters; in fact, they didn't seem to do him much more good than the small-pox, for he disappeared shortly, leaving the white man and his progressive institutions in full possession.

The superiority of the newcomer was demonstrated immediately by his use of the springs; for whereas the ignorant aborigine abandoned them for firewater, the white man combined the two to good advantage. That is to say, he established a cure, and after a winter at the pots in the city he came to the village to be purged and purified. He came in such numbers, frequently accompanied by his ailing wives, that the establishment prospered mightily and became known in far places.

Indeed, it prospered so greatly that the minister of the gospel who founded it was moved to show his gratitude. So he built a tabernacle and ordained that once a year foreign missionaries of his faith might come for a week of spiritual refreshment and free baths. Thus does

the use of rum decimate the heathen and cause the righteous to multiply.

The convocation was a success from the outset. The brethren and sistern who happened to be on leave in the United States came to tell of their work in the vineyards of India and hear the tidings from the fields of Turkestan. It was a week of fervent singing and growing enthusiasm for the cause, due partly perhaps to the tonic effect of the baths. Veterans were strengthened and recruits were fired to turn the hordes of China from their idols and their mummeries. It was, truly, an occasion of great spiritual and bodily refreshment.

A small boy of the village, however, remembered these annual gatherings chiefly as one glorious Saturday afternoon when the windows of the tabernacle were darkened and stereopticon views were shown of the missionaries herding their flocks in far away pastures. One saw them riding over mountain tops in hammocks slung on the glistening shoulders of benighted blacks. One saw the benighted won over to Christianity and Mother Hubbard, grinning beatifically against a background of tropical color. And perhaps the very next slide would shift the scene to the Arctic and show a team of wolf-dogs hurrying an evangel to the salvation of the Eskimo. After many such astounding pictures, a dark-skinned girl, a rescued brand, would sing, "Jesus Loves Me, This I Know," in the very same language in which she once had worshiped Buddha. It was an impressive and altogether enjoyable occasion for a small boy, especially as he never drew any parallel between the

Indian of the East and the Indian who had once lived in his own village.

Very likely his elders drew no such parallel, either, though it was understood that they didn't esteem the missionaries highly. It seemed that the evangelists had some idea that the gift of free baths was equivalent to giving them the freedom of the city; or, as some of the critics put it, they had been waited on hand and foot by the heathen for so long that they expected the same consideration from white folks. It seemed, so a small boy gathered, that they were apt to demand reduced rates at the village boarding-houses and cost prices at the stores. Besides, they had what was considered an annoying habit of stopping villagers and asking:

"Brother, are you a good Christian?"

Even a small boy was not exempt from the inquiry, but while he could give the desired answer and hurry on, elder folks seemed to get cholerick. Some went so far as to call the brethren damned busybodies, and all, it seemed, professed to be relieved when a group photograph of the delegates, taken on the high steps leading to the main entrance of the cure, signified the end of the convention. A small boy always watched this proceeding, and while he never bought one of the pictures he was able to recall twenty-five years later that it was a remarkable grouping of tight lips and feverish eyes.

II

FREQUENTLY, after the evangelical flood had receded, one or more of the brethren and sistern would be found clinging to the peaceful shores of the village. They had served their time among the heathen and now sought a quiet and economical harbor in which to lie up and wait for the final passage to glory. What more natural than that the friendly attitude of the founder of the cure, the religious tone of the place, should hold many of them. So, from year to year they dropped off until finally they were numerous enough to give a perennial air of evangelism to the community.

In somewhat that fashion, Dr. Puckett and his family attached themselves to the village. He was a medical missionary who came, after ten years in India, to taste the spiritual refreshments and try the baths, and remained as a member of the staff of the water cure. It was an unwritten law of the founder of that institution that its doctors must also be able to wrestle with sinful souls. Scoffers among the villagers claimed that if a man were sufficiently zealous it wasn't necessary that he be a doctor, but that was just an outcropping of the town and gown feeling and really didn't apply to Dr. Puckett; while he was indubitably a man with the traditional passion for souls, he was actually a doctor and could prove it by his framed degree.

A small boy never had occasion to try the doctor's pills, but he learned a great deal about the good man's gifts as an evangelist. Soon after Dr. Puckett established his home he affiliated with the local evangelical church. He was welcomed by the brethren; doubly welcomed, for most of the doctors of the cure snobbishly performed their devotions in the more exclusive chapel connected with it. Dr. Puckett was a bustling, bald man with eager eyes behind gold spectacles, and it was inevitable that he should become one of the leaders of the congregation. He expressed his enthusiasm in general ways for a time, and then steered into a definite channel as leader of Dr. Puckett's Sunday Bible Class for Young Men.

When the class was formed, a small boy was hardly eligible for membership. He was still in the intermediate department, and for once he was glad he was there. He had found a Sunday School teacher who lived on a farm and talked much more about horses and dogs than about hell fire and brimstone. The teacher also owned a sugar bush and in the early spring his class was sure to be asked to come out when it was time to sugar off. Plans for the event had even been discussed one entire session, to the complete exclusion of the Bible text, which was to the

effect that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand and last call for repentance had sounded. A small boy was glad to avoid discussion of such a text, and then and there he decided to stay in that class so long as he had to go to Sunday School.

The other brethren and sistern who had taught him had been entirely too free with their references to the hot hereafter reserved for sinners. They were appallingly definite about the place, just as they were amazingly exact as to the minute when the world would come to an end and precipitate all the trouble for the unrepentant. A small boy beat his head against the walls of circumstance, but he nursed his bumps secretly. Undoubtedly these terrors were so, because they were in the Bible. Terrifying thoughts ran through his mind at night, but no good complaining about them. He couldn't escape the inevitable. He could only try to shut it out of his mind; and so he was ready to fight and die for a Sunday School teacher who could talk for an hour and a half about the sport of translating maple sap into maple sugar.

He was a little more passionate in his determination to stick to that class, because he knew that presently a birthday would automatically move him on—and there was no place to go but to Dr. Puckett's Sunday Bible Class for Young Men. He didn't want to go there. He hadn't heard Dr. Puckett preach, but some instinct warned him that when he did he would hear a great deal about places and impending events, and for six days be paralyzed with fears that would be renewed on the seventh. There was something about the doctor's glittering eye that boded barehanded treatment of the crack of doom and the awful depths of eternity. So a small boy clung to his instructor in farm lore with added desperation, and when the time of departure came he resorted to revolt. He announced that he wouldn't go to Sunday School if he had to leave his present class.

But the rebellion didn't succeed. He continued to go to Sunday School, and

to none other than Dr. Puckett's Sunday Bible Class for Young Men—and it was even as he feared.

III

THE Dr. Pucketts of that savage evangelical denomination were either utterly sincere bigots, or they were the most impious men that ever dared the wrath of God. They were so sure of His ways and His plans; they might have been temporal advance agents, authorized to make arrangements for the great spectacle incident to the trump of Gabriel. They were constantly announcing the day and the hour, and they seemed not at all abashed when designated days passed and left the world intact. There was a great deal of cheerful assurance about them, anyway; they were perfectly certain, it seemed, that they would be of the few chosen among the many called, and that virtually the entire quota would be selected from among members of their faith in good standing.

Of their anxiety to reach their home in the skies, a small boy had little doubt; but he did have some difficulty in reconciling their ethereal longings with the practices of their daily lives. They were not worldly men. They didn't play cards and they didn't dance; and when barnstorming troupes came to the village opera house the brethren were apt to be in the church next door praying for the strayed lambs of theatre-goers. What a small boy couldn't quite grasp was that even as they longed to hurl themselves at the bosom of Abraham, business went on as usual. Dr. Puckett established a comfortable home, educated his children as though they were to live out their natural lives, even invested in a summer cottage on a nearby lake. So with the other brethren; with one eye watching the skies for the first sign of the crack, they could still spear the passing dollar with deadly accuracy. A small boy couldn't see all this clearly; he could only wonder in a groping way why, if the end was due so soon, the brethren should so thriftily

pursue their worldly trades and professions.

However, effects were much more important than causes. It didn't so much matter that he couldn't reconcile some apparent contradictions, as that Dr. Puckett and his associate brethren were always giving voice to their anxiety to reach the promised land.

Dr. Puckett's Sunday Bible Class for Young Men met, after the usual morning services, in the balcony of the church proper. A small boy delayed his appearance there as long as possible and then climbed the narrow stairs slowly, breathing sparingly at the peculiar odor of sanctity that thickened as he mounted. Up at last, and with reluctant feet to a pew not too near the front, but not, unfortunately, out of earshot. A glance around at his neighbors in their best blacks and a glance toward the center of the balcony, near the railing, where Dr. Puckett stood with that diabolically assured expression which always heightened a small boy's apprehensions. The good man's eyes shone, his gold spectacles glistened, even the long Prince Albert seemed to throw off effulgent rays. The most cheerful man that ever believed in infant damnation.

Dr. Puckett thumbed his Bible, preparatory to opening the discussion, and a small boy had an idea that in the interim he might grab a hymnal and become so absorbed in reading that his ears would be closed to the doctor's voice. For instance, here was a page on which someone had written: "See Page 146." And what might be on Page 146? A suggestion to see: "Page 34." And on Page 34? Directions to: "See Page 87." Well, an interesting pursuit, anyway. One might get completely absorbed in it, perhaps, and presently be aware that Dr. Puckett had finished and that it was time to go home to fricasseed chicken.

So from page to page a small boy industriously followed the trail, until finally it came to an end with a coarse:

"Ha, ha! fooled again."

Fooled again, indeed! On that final

page a wandering, disloyal eye caught, among the dolorous words of the hymn, a reference to "that dread day when I shall stand before Jehovah's awful throne—"

Thud! A small boy was hurled against the walls of circumstance again; his thoughts were back in fearful channels; his eardrums vibrating to the sound of Dr. Puckett's prophecies.

It seemed that the lesson was the parable of the good Samaritan, and the moral was that it behooved one to be prepared, for it was impossible for mortal man to tell when the Lord would come. He might come like a thief in the night, or sweep down in a pillar of cloud in the middle of the day, and with incredible swiftness the few who were to be chosen would be lifted into the sky and on earth there would be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth as the wicked were consumed.

A question.

It was that lank haired fellow who clerked in N. T. Humphrey's General Store. He had heard talk about the Jews going back to Jerusalem. Now wasn't that a fulfilment of one of the prophecies indicating the imminence of the last day?

Dr. Puckett was immediately enveloped in cheerfulness.

"Yes, brother, yes indeed. That is one of the prophecies indicating fulfilment of man's mortal mission. Yes, the time is short now. . . . Soon we shall gather at the river. . . ."

Another question.

What a creature for information that fellow was.

Did Dr. Puckett think that the end would come quite soon? A matter of months? Or years?

The doctor was fairly bursting with intimate knowledge.

"In a few months, perhaps. In a few years, yes. In our lifetime, certainly. We shall see the day, yes. With our own eyes we shall see it. . . . And the chosen shall go singing to their immortal home and the wicked shall go where the worm dieth not. . . ."

"Amen." The emotional note brought

a sonorous response from Brother Pitt and a small boy struggled with qualms in the pit of his stomach.

Another question.

Oh, enough! A small boy turned a pleading face toward this fiend. But the voice went relentlessly on.

Wasn't it true, Dr. Puckett, that many other prophecies had been fulfilled? Weren't the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer? And there were wars and rumors of wars—and, recently, he had seen the first horseless carriage. Didn't the Bible say that in the last days chariots would rush about without horses?

"True, brother, true. The prophecies are being fulfilled according to the Bible. . . . Repent ye, sinners, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. . . ."

Any day, then, was likely to be the great day?

"Yes, brother, yes indeed. To-day, to-morrow, this month. . . . And Michael and his angels will war in the skies and the Heavens shall be rent asunder. . . ."

Now, at last, a small boy's ears were closed to Dr. Puckett's voice. He could hear no more because he could endure no more; and when the service came to an end he passed out into sunshine which was not warm and went home to eat fricasseed chicken which was without savor.

"To-day, to-morrow, this month."

Why was one born?

IV

THE shadow of that godly man fell across a small boy's path not alone on Sunday. Dr. Puckett had, in fact, two subsidiary shadows—two sons in his own image. One was a fleshy boy, unhealthily fat and afflicted with pimples; the other had his father's missionary eyes and the emaciated figure of one who fasted constantly. And their physical unlikeness but accentuated their spiritual sameness.

Except that the emaciated Puckett could purse his lips and trumpet like a bugler, a trick he had learned while liv-

ing near a British army post in India, a small boy found the brothers Puckett strangely repellent. They didn't play baseball nor football; nor did they join the gallant bands of marauders that maneuvered among village orchards at night. It was hardly to be expected, of course, that they would take part in that last pastime; a small boy knew that it was a sinful business and if persisted in would be sure to bring the fateful verdict from Jehovah's awful throne. The failure of the young Pucketts to play daylight games was not so easily explained. If it were necessary to foreswear all sports to insure membership among the elect, one ought to act accordingly; yet it was difficult to believe that baseball was a sinful pleasure, and that feeling of uncertainty was complicated by the fact that the brothers Puckett were softies and congenial muffers.

A small boy would have been glad to forget these fellows and the direful speculations their presence evoked, but he was not permitted to do so. As if it were not enough for Dr. Puckett to sear him on Sunday with his dreadful prophecies, the fat, pimply Puckett chose him as his partner for the band of praying yokefellows. These were pairs of boys told off, according to the custom of their church to pray for the salvation of other boys. Whenever the twain met they were expected to retire to some convenient spot and wrestle for the souls of their playmates. It was a practice which any self-respecting boy evaded if he could—who was he to set himself above, say a good, if unregenerate, pitcher like Bill Thompson—and a small boy felt that life had played its last mean trick upon him when he learned that he and the fat Puckett were a team. No chance of getting that fellow to put the business off.

Well, if the fat Puckett couldn't be put off he could at least be avoided. A small boy could stay at his desk during school recess and after school he could go home the back way, along the road past the collection of shanties called Dublin and so into his back-yard and

into the barn. He didn't have to remain hidden at night, because the fat Puckett never roamed after dark; but how to avoid him on Saturday and Sunday was a problem never satisfactorily solved. He didn't play baseball, but he was apt to be a spectator, and of course he would be at church and Sunday School.

So there were days when the inevitable had to be faced, but not until a small boy had suggested, at least, that to-morrow would be a better day.

The fat Puckett always had a deadly answer to this proposal.

"But to-morrow may never come," said he.

"Why not? . . . Oh! . . . Well then. . . ."

"Let's pray for Arthur Sheldon," the fat Puckett suggested.

"Beany? Aw gee, he's all right."

"Then you choose a boy."

A small boy wanted to pray for no one, except possibly himself, and that seemed an improper suggestion, and so the fat Puckett's proposal usually was adopted. A small boy mumbled and halted and finally put the seal of an amen upon the supplication and fled as precipitately as he dared.

V

SCHOOL vacation came but Dr. Puckett's Sunday Bible Class for Young Men and the fearful prophecies went on. A small boy played baseball and went swimming daily and generally made motions that to his parents and the outside world indicated the happy irresponsibility of youth. But in his heart he was troubled. The walls of circumstance held him closely, and on dark nights he thought long, black thoughts about life and death and eternity.

Maybe the end would come that very night?

Well, but how could there be an end?

How could there be just nothing?

Just how good must one be to escape the wrath of Jehovah?

How could hell fire burn and burn and burn?

A small boy turned these puzzling eventualities over in his mind and could find no help. Dr. Puckett got all his information from the Bible, and the Bible was true. Nothing to do about it, except think about them as little as possible. Not much chance of doing that, though, when a fellow had to listen to Dr. Puckett every week. . . . Say, why weren't there vacations from Sunday School just the same as from regular school? Well, there ought to be. But there wouldn't be. No. No such luck.

And then—it actually happened.

Amazingly enough, there came a Sunday when it was announced that Dr. Puckett's Sunday Bible Class for Young Men would not meet during August. A small boy never tasted such fricasseed chicken as his mother cooked that day, and he wasn't at all envious when he heard that Dr. Puckett and his family, including the fat Puckett, his yokefellow, were going to spend the month at their cottage on the lake.

Who wanted a lake when there was a fine swimming hole near home and plenty of baseball—and no prophesying Pucketts?

VI

ONE night in early September a small boy lay in bed and suddenly recalled that months had passed since Dr. Puckett had begun his prophecies—and not a trumpet had sounded, not a single crack of doom had shattered the sky. So far the good man had been wrong. . . . Perhaps he would continue to be wrong. . . . Perhaps he would be wrong as long as a small boy lived.

A little feeling of resentment against the saintly doctor stirred in a small boy as he dropped off to sleep. He didn't know then what was happening to him—but a little flame of hate against the Dr. Pucketts of the world was kindling in him. The flame would never quite efface the wound he had suffered, but it would scar the place over. He would hate Dr. Pucketts and their barbarous dogma as long as he lived—but never again would he be frightened by them.

The Plague

[A Moving-Picture]

By *Walter Hasenclever*

(Author of "Mankind," "Antigone," "The Son," Etc., Etc.)

NOTE: *Walter Hasenclever is perhaps the foremost exponent of Expressionism. His plays and sketches have for the last seven years held the stages of Central Europe and have attracted the attention of the world. "The Plague" is his latest work.*

Chief Characters

THE CHILD
THE BANKER
THE DANCER
THE INVENTOR
THE GIRL
THE STUDENT

Minor Characters

THE SHIP'S DOCTOR
THE CAPTAIN
THE PILOT
THE SLENDER LADY
THE STOUT GENTLEMAN
THE TELEGRAPH OPERATOR
THE MINISTER
THE COUNT

THE ADJUTANT
THE BRIDE
THE BRIDEGROOM
THE PRIEST
THE OLD MAN
THE DYING MAN
THE NOTARY
THE SERVANT

PROLOGUE

SCENE 1

*In the Year 2000 the World Resembled
Paradise*

A tower in a city near a great river.
Bright sunlight. Ships sailing with
spread banners.

SCENE 2

A parade. Children strew flowers

about. A priest in his robes of cere-
mony. A waving of palm branches.

SCENE 3

Peace Everlasting

A main concourse with moving car-
riages and automobiles. Men and
women on horseback.

SCENE 4

A village festival. Dancing. Music.

SCENE 5

A roofgarden hung with lanterns. Fashionable men and women.

SCENE 6

The Discovery of a Super-bread

A chemical laboratory. Test tubes and burners. Chemical compounds and reactions.

SCENE 7

Apparatus veiled in smoke. Electrical discharges. Motion of a lever. Then bread.

SCENE 8

A great hall set with tables. Bread. People appear, cut portions of the bread, eat.

SCENE 9

End of Poverty

Police Station wherein beggars appear. Doff their rags, receive shoes and clothing. Sleep.

SCENE 10

Brotherhood

A street filled with a great crowd. Men embrace each other. Laughing faces.

SCENE 11

The World Exposition

A park. Decorated pavilions. A tablet: The United States of Europe. A parade of white men, negroes, mulattoes, Japanese.

SCENE 12

Masquerade ball. Confetti, streamers, dancing. The scene darkens. Night, an open sky, one blood-red star.

In the Year 2000 the World Comes to an End

The hall becomes light. The dancers move toward the door, which opens. DEATH enters.

ACT I

SCENE 13

The giant steamer leaves the Indian Ocean. The deck of a great ship.

Cranes, anchor, trunks. Indian faces. Cargo stowed away.

SCENE 14

The ship in full swing. Smoke issues from the stacks.

SCENE 15

The life on board. Passengers.

SCENE 16

Telegraph room. Operator seated at the instrument:

Greenwich Observatory 2:30

Comet Discovered!

*Signifies, According to Prophecy,
the End of the World*

SCENE 17

Dining saloon. Fashionable gathering. Telegram passes from hand to hand. Much head shaking. THE SLENDER LADY laughs.

SCENE 18

The storage room, a rat runs wildly to and fro.

SCENE 19

Night. The deck. Gentlemen and ladies in evening dress. A telescope. They observe the stars.

SCENE 20

The telescope points to a blood-red star.

SCENE 21

THE STOUT GENTLEMEN raises his glass: "*To the end of the World.*" The glasses clink.

SCENE 22

The lower deck. Straw mats with sleeping figures. The rat runs past, bites one of the men. He jumps up, clutches the bitten spot. The sleepers wake.

SCENE 23

The ship's hospital, an unconscious patient on a cot. . . . THE DOCTOR, armed with a stethoscope, listens, feels his pulse, opens his eyelids.

SCENE 24

The lower deck. Women nursing children. Food is distributed in tin plates. Someone drops his plate, falls down. They run to assist him. Another falls.

SCENE 25

The ship's hospital. A patient with black spots. THE DOCTOR takes his temperature.

SCENE 26

The mercury shows 105 degrees.

SCENE 27

THE CAPTAIN'S cabin; THE CAPTAIN is reading the log. THE DOCTOR in white enters.

Corpse on Board!

THE CAPTAIN, frightened, asks question. THE DOCTOR shrugs his shoulders.

SCENE 28

The ship's hospital, full of patients; THE DOCTOR makes a diagnosis. The patients turn black. THE DOCTOR at the microscope.

SCENE 29

First-class deck. Comfortable chairs. A card game. Sudden fright. A rat runs past; the gentlemen fling their canes at it.

SCENE 30

THE DOCTOR at the microscope. Horrified. Looks up, looks into microscope, puts his hand to his head:

The Plague!

THE DOCTOR stands motionless. The patients become light again.

SCENE 31

The dining salon. THE STOUT GENTLEMAN raises his glass. Becomes giddy, the glass falls. A neighbor assists him. Commotion.

SCENE 32

THE CAPTAIN'S cabin. THE CAPTAIN and THE DOCTOR; THE DOCTOR is speaking. THE CAPTAIN is staggered, talks, bangs on the table, threatens.

THE DOCTOR bows. THE CAPTAIN and THE DOCTOR gaze at each other.

SCENE 33

The Secret!

The deck at night. Dead bodies are thrown into the sea.

SCENE 34

The lower deck. Children in the arms of their dead mothers.

SCENE 35

The main saloon, a band playing. A gentleman gives THE SLENDER LADY a light. She takes a puff, falls forward. The band disperses. Consternation.

Poison!

They crowd around the gentleman.

SCENE 36

The boiler-room. Dying sailors. A stoker drags himself to the telephone, talks. The rudder. THE PILOT answers. Collapses.

SCENE 37

Rudderless!

SCENE 38

THE CAPTAIN'S cabin. A battle; sailors force their way in. THE CAPTAIN with a revolver in each hand.

SCENE 39

Men in uproar.

SCENE 40

The telegraph room. THE OPERATOR at the instrument. THE CAPTAIN enters. THE OPERATOR signals.

Ship in Distress!

THE OPERATOR suddenly throws up his hands. THE CAPTAIN takes the key.

SCENE 41

The lower deck full of dead bodies.

SCENE 42

The storage room full of rats.

SCENE 43

The telegraph room. THE CAPTAIN is motionless. THE OPERATOR lies on the floor.

SCENE 44

The ship's hospital. THE DOCTOR near the patients. Water rushing in. THE DOCTOR continues working.

SCENE 45

Shipwreck.

SCENE 46

The rats leave the ship. A swarm of rats climbs over the bodies, jumps into the water, and swims away.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II

SCENE 47

The Dancer in the Port

A street. A theatre with a billboard. THE DANCER comes out, enters an automobile, drives away. A warehouse, ships, docks. The automobile stops near a dock. Old-clothes shop. THE DANCER steps out.

SCENE 48

The Indian Garment

Old-clothes shop. DEATH as the dealer. THE DANCER enters, the dealer bows. THE DANCER seats herself, talks. The dealer opens a case, shows the Indian Garment. THE DANCER nods. The dealer displays the garment. A rat jumps out. THE DANCER is frightened. The dealer laughs. THE DANCER pays. The dealer carries the garment out to the automobile.

SCENE 49

The dressing-room. THE DANCER in the garment. A maid assists her.

SCENE 50

The Dance

Inside the theatre. The stage. The audience. Indian decorations. THE DANCER dances.

SCENE 51

The dressing-room. The maid lies on the floor motionless. THE DANCER enters, is startled, rings. Servants come.

SCENE 52

Newspaper Headline:

300 People at Yesterday's Performance Become Suddenly Ill

A street. The theatre with the billboard. A crowd gathers.

SCENE 53

Granary. The grain moves. Rats.

SCENE 54

Railroad station. THE DANCER arrives in her automobile. The ticket office. The train.

SCENE 55

Pullman car. THE DANCER and other travelers. The train departs. THE DANCER rises, opens her suitcase. A gentleman assists her. The Indian dress is visible. THE DANCER takes book, reads. The gentleman suddenly puts his hand to his forehead, falls back on pillows. Commotion. THE DANCER pulls the emergency cord. The train stops. The gentleman is carried out.

SCENE 56

The Minister's Office

THE MINISTER at his desk. A servant with a telegram. . . . THE MINISTER reads:

*Inexplicable Death of 700 People
In the Port*

SCENE 57

Night. The train with a locomotive. Bright fire. DEATH as the engineer. The train rushes past. A lighted window.

SCENE 58

THE MINISTER'S office. A servant enters with a telegram. THE MINISTER reads:

Rumor of a Plague!

THE MINISTER jumps up, seizes telephone.

SCENE 59

Railroad Station. Train arrives. THE DANCER steps out.

SCENE 60

Cabinet Meeting

The conference chamber. THE MINISTER enters. The gentlemen rise. THE MINISTER talks. A secretary hands him the resolution; THE MINISTER signs.

SCENE 61

All Trains Banned

The station. A crowd. The entrances are blocked.

SCENE 62

A large public square. News extras, crowds. THE DANCER in her automobile. DEATH as the chauffeur.

SCENE 63

Save the Capitol!

Field in front of the city. Laborers digging trenches.

SCENE 64

The street. The theatre with the billboard showing a picture of THE DANCER. Tickets are purchased.

SCENE 65

A box. THE COUNT and THE ADJUTANT enter.

The Count Sees the Dancer

THE COUNT has an opera-glass. Turns back, speaks. Applauds. THE ADJUTANT leaves the box. THE COUNT looks through the glass.

SCENE 66

A private room at a restaurant, decorated with flowers; the curtain is drawn. THE COUNT at the table, cigarettes. The curtain parts. THE DANCER in a street cloak, smiles. THE COUNT kisses her hand. THE DANCER lets her cloak fall. The Indian dress. Draws the curtain. Music is heard; they dance. THE COUNT falls, THE DANCER continues her dance. THE COUNT dead. THE DANCER runs to him, holds the body in her arms, horrified. The waiter brings champagne. Alarm. The guests gather; THE COUNT's clothing is torn off. A black mark on his breast.

Terror.

The Plague!

Furniture is overthrown. All flee.

SCENE 67

Night. The river. Bridge. THE DANCER rushes to the bridge, tears off the dress, throws it into the river.

SCENE 68

The Exchange

A great room. Men grouped. Electric sign.

Clothing 113

Coal 172

Coffee 92

Wool 107

Sugar 60

THE BANKER enters, dressed in fur coat and high hat.

The Banker

Respectful greetings. THE BANKER takes the orders. Unrest. A liveried servant pushes through the crowd, whispers to THE BANKER. The numbers are changed. Commotion. Fingers point to the sign. Figures are still lower.

SCENE 69

Alarm

Clock tower. The bell moves, slowly—then faster.

SCENE 70

The Exchange. Papers are flying about, everything in uproar. THE BANKER in the midst of it.

SCENE 71

In front of the Exchange. An enraged mob. THE BANKER steps out.

SCENE 72

The face of THE BANKER, staring coldly at the mob, suddenly lights up.

SCENE 73

An Idea!

THE BANKER slowly descends the steps.

The Power of Money

The mob parts. He stalks past.

SCENE 74

The river. The background: the bridge, the city. The dress floats in the water.

SCENE 75

The river. Village children playing. The dress floats by; the children fish it out. DEATH as a peddler, with horse and wagon. The children bring him the dress.

SCENE 76

The Village Fair

The Market. Merry-go-round. DEATH at the booth. A bride and groom buy the dress.

SCENE 77

The Altar. The bridal procession. THE BRIDE and GROOM. THE PRIEST clasps their hands. THE BRIDE sways, THE BRIDEGROOM falls. All are terrified.

SCENE 78

The market-place. The village in death. The merry-go-round is deserted.

SCENE 79

Only One Child Remains Alive

A child in white steps out of the church and slowly passes the market-place.

END OF ACT II

ACT III

SCENE 80

The Telephone Conversation

THE BANKER's office. THE BANKER grasps the telephone. Turns the dial.

SCENE 81

THE MINISTER's office. THE MINISTER holds the receiver.

SCENE 82

THE BANKER speaks.

SCENE 83

THE MINISTER answers.

SCENE 84

THE BANKER takes the paper, reads aloud.

SCENE 85

THE MINISTER nods. A rat runs across the table. THE MINISTER, terrified, lets the receiver fall.

SCENE 86

THE BANKER asks a question.

SCENE 87

THE MINISTER is motionless, head on the table.

SCENE 88

THE BANKER turns the dial madly. No answer. Hurls the telephone to the floor. Takes his hat and coat, goes.

SCENE 89

The Inventor

Garret. Chemical apparatus. Microscope. THE INVENTOR examines a compound in the light. THE BANKER enters, talks. THE INVENTOR bows. THE BANKER takes a seat, points to the apparatus. THE INVENTOR takes a book from the table entitled:

A Study of the Plague

THE BANKER nods. THE INVENTOR shrugs his shoulders, points to the poorly furnished room. THE BANKER takes out his cheque-book and hands THE INVENTOR a cheque.

One Million Dollars!

THE INVENTOR jumps up, seizes THE BANKER's hand. THE BANKER holds him off.

"On One Condition"

THE INVENTOR stares at him as he continues:

"The Discovery Is Mine!"

THE INVENTOR agrees.

SCENE 90

Coffins.

SCENE 91

Houses with black crosses. DEATH, as a baker, rings his bell. A window

is opened, a hand lowers a basket. DEATH puts in a loaf and the basket is raised.

SCENE 92

The Student's Dream

A student's room. THE STUDENT enters with a brief-case. Sits near the stove; the fire's glow lights up his face. He takes the paper and reads:

*A Million Offered for a Remedy
Against the Plague!*

The room becomes dark; THE STUDENT falls asleep.

The Dream

THE CHILD in white appears, touches THE STUDENT's shoulder. THE STUDENT rises, still in sleep. They leave.

SCENE 93

Gambling hall. Players, THE BANKER dealing. He loses, plays, loses. THE CHILD leads THE STUDENT past.

SCENE 94

Dance hall with dancers. THE DANCER is performing. THE CHILD leads THE STUDENT past.

SCENE 95

Hospital with cots. An old man dying, his daughter sits at the edge of the bed. THE OLD MAN stirs, threatens with his fist, dies. THE CHILD leads THE STUDENT past.

SCENE 96

Cemetery. THE CHILD leads THE STUDENT to a huge grave, disappears. THE STUDENT awakes in his own room.

SCENE 97

The Student Speaks to the People

In front of the Exchange, a crowd. THE STUDENT on the steps. Prophetic gestures. Men throw away gold and jewels. THE GIRL of the hospital loosens her hair and cuts it off. THE STUDENT and THE GIRL gaze at each other.

SCENE 98

The Exchange.

S. S.—Jan.—6

The Banker's Stock

THE BANKER draws stock certificates from his pocket, which he sells readily.
Serum Against the Plague \$1,000

SCENE 99

The stairs. THE STUDENT takes THE GIRL's hand and they walk off together.

END OF ACT III

ACT IV

SCENE 100

The Black Death

Roofs.

Cats spread the disease. Cats springing from roof to roof.

SCENE 101

The Will

A street door, a cot is borne away, a dying man thereon. A notary approaches. THE DYING MAN speaks. THE NOTARY makes notes.

SCENE 102

No Hope!

A church. Kneeling men and women.

SCENE 103

The Inventor at Work

A great laboratory. THE INVENTOR at work injecting serum into rats. THE BANKER enters, and is shown the test-tubes.

SCENE 104

Love!

THE STUDENT's room. THE STUDENT enters with THE GIRL, kisses her. He is frightened.

SCENE 105

THE GIRL's neck. A black mark.

SCENE 106

THE STUDENT's face as he sees the mark.

SCENE 107

The Plague!!

They embrace.

SCENE 108

The Banker's Prisoner

The laboratory. THE INVENTOR goes to the door, finds it locked. He shakes it, goes to the next door, finds that also locked. Suddenly understands. Foreboding. Opens the window. Guards before the entrance.

SCENE 109

THE STUDENT'S room. THE STUDENT and his sweetheart are unconscious. THE CHILD enters. Stirs them.

SCENE 110

THE STUDENT and his sweetheart awake. A light. THE CHILD leads them forth.

SCENE 111

The laboratory. Rats. THE INVENTOR is feverish, takes blood, mixes it.

SCENE 112

The Last Hope

The door of the laboratory. Guards. An enraged crowd gazes upward.

SCENE 113

The laboratory. THE INVENTOR takes the mixture, tests it, goes to microscope, looks, waves his arms:

"The Serum"

Tears open the window, shouts.

SCENE 114

Rejoicing in the crowd.

SCENE 115

The Exchange. THE BANKER. Commotion. The sign reads:

Serum Stock 2000

Congratulations and handshaking.

SCENE 116

A forest. THE CHILD leads THE STUDENT and his sweetheart past.

SCENE 117

Laboratory. THE INVENTOR. A servant brings a newspaper. THE INVENTOR reads:

Great Invention!

The Inventor Will Produce His Remedy.

THE INVENTOR gazes at the table, satisfied

SCENE 118

A small flask with a black cross.

SCENE 119

THE INVENTOR lets fall the paper, opens a magazine. Astonished, he jumps up.

SCENE 120

A photograph of THE DANCER in the Indian dress.

SCENE 121

THE INVENTOR appears hypnotized. A long, ardent look.

SCENE 122

Men of Science

A university. A large auditorium. An operating table, with a chair. Professors appear. The seats are filled. THE BANKER sits on the chair. THE INVENTOR enters, bows, stands near the table. A plague-stricken man is carried in, wrapped in white sheets and blindfolded. His right hand is visible, lifeless, waxen. The bearers lay their burden on the table.

The Experiment

THE INVENTOR points to the lifeless hand, takes the flask from his pocket, fills a syringe. Suddenly stops, stares into space.

SCENE 123

Photograph of THE DANCER. The Indian dress.

SCENE 124

THE INVENTOR, distracted, takes the patient's hand.

SCENE 125

The hand. THE INVENTOR injects serum.

SCENE 126

THE INVENTOR suddenly releases the hand, grasps his forehead; his eyes are glazed.

"The Plague"

THE INVENTOR collapses over the body of the patient.

SCENE 127

The inventor's hand, in death agony, crushes the flask.

SCENE 128

The patient's hand. It moves.

SCENE 129

Auditorium. Uproar. THE BANKER rushes forward.

"The Serum"!!

THE BANKER shakes THE INVENTOR, grasps his hand. The flask is destroyed.

SCENE 130

THE BANKER'S look of horror.

SCENE 131

The auditorium. Wild flight. THE INVENTOR on the floor. The room is empty. The patient rises and throws off his wrappings. DEATH! Steps over THE INVENTOR'S body and goes to the door.

SCENE 132

The university. DEATH walks past in white sheets. People fall on all sides. DEATH walks on.

SCENE 133

The Panic

The Exchange. Tumult. The shares are torn and thrown into THE BANKER'S face; they attempt to seize him. He holds them back with a revolver.

SCENE 134

The lake. Full moon. THE CHILD leads forth THE STUDENT and his sweetheart.

END OF ACT IV

ACT V

SCENE 135

Deserted city. Animals, masterless, wander about dazedly.

SCENE 136

A broken window. A house in the grip of death.

SCENE 137

Cave-dwellers

Men at a fire.

Madness

They run and dance.

SCENE 138

The End of Happiness

The lake in the moonlight. THE CHILD spreads his arms like an angel. Wings appear upon his back. He flies over the lake. THE STUDENT and his sweetheart gaze after him, then embrace, and walk into the lake.

SCENE 139

A Meeting

A street. THE BANKER in his automobile. THE DANCER in the street. The automobile stops; THE DANCER smiles and enters.

SCENE 140

The Banker's Palace

The automobile draws up to the entrance. Men and women on the steps. THE BANKER carries THE DANCER out of the automobile.

SCENE 141

The Company

Tables set for a feast.

SCENE 142

Unexpected Guests

The courtyard. Rats.

SCENE 143

The dining-room. A servant steps up and whispers to THE BANKER. He drops his glass and goes out.

SCENE 144

THE BANKER and his servant at a window. Rats on the stairs. THE BANKER makes an angry gesture, the servants bows. The window is shut.

SCENE 145

A park. Servants drag up wood and set fire to it.

SCENE 146

The Wonderful Wall

The tower. Fire surrounds the palace.

SCENE 147

A field with the palace in the background. Figures at the horizon run about like ghosts, jump into the flames.

SCENE 148

A balcony with large doors. The company leaves, laughing.

SCENE 149

The Death Dance

A masked ball. THE DANCER dances. Naked. Stares at a door which opens, revealing a masked man. THE BANKER threatens him, but he comes nearer. THE BANKER falls, THE DANCER screams. The man in the mask touches her hand. They dance. He turns and removes his mask. DEATH!!

SCENE 150

Rats in swarms.

SCENE 151

The palace in flames.



Wanderer

By A. Newberry Choyce

EVEN the wind on a very high hill
 In a tall straight pine is sometimes still;
 Even the sad tumultuous sea
 Has moments of tranquillity.

And a man will turn four little walls
 To a sweeter use than a million halls;
 And a maid will wear a rose at her breast
 And follow her lover and come to rest.

But how could I heed or ever stay
 And never arise and go my way;
 For the áche I carry has no ease
 From Iceland to the Caribbees.



THE ideal age for a woman is the time when she is too old to remember her first kiss and too young to think of her final one.



Success

By Paul Deresco Augsburg

I

IT was on his tenth birthday that Dinty Maloney withdrew from the Presidential race in favor of Isadore Blotzstein, who was born in Riga. Standing on a street-sweeping can at the corner of Madison and Sangamon Streets, he renounced his intention of occupying the White House in the following brief statement:

"To hell wit' bein' President. I'll give all me votes to you, Izzy, if you just cop me a gat from your old man's hock shop."

Dinty came to this decision only after a careful study of the country's greatest celebrities. Taft, who was Chief Executive at that time, had a great deal to do with it. Aside from attending the opening baseball game and pitching the first ball, his term was barren of actual accomplishment. He got his name in the papers, to be sure, but so did "Big Mike" Carrigan and "Red" Schmidt.

"Y' see, it's this way," observed Dinty, indicating a huge red screamer across his stack of afternoon journals. "'Big Mike Shoots Banker.' He's so well known they don't ever have to print his last name. But you never see no headlines calling the President 'William,' do you?"

"All right, that just shows you got to be a moiderer to be known by everybody. If the President wants to break into the poipers he has to make a speech, and I hate speeches. Then he's all the time got to shake hands with Japs and Dagoes and Senators. And he's got to wear a standup collar.

"Now a gunman shakes hands just when he dam' pleases. He don't never

make speeches; he kills Japs and Dagoes and anybody else he don't like; and when he breaks into the poiper you bet everybody reads the whole woiks and doesn't stop at no headlines. Yep, you can have me job as President, Izzy. I'm going to become a *real* guy."

Dinty followed the usual formula for success, as set forth by the sui-mades themselves, in any present-day issue of one of the success magazines. He applied himself while the rest of the world was sleeping. To the Sunday School and the Y. M. C. A. and other beckoning temptations he turned a resolute back. No discouragement could daunt him, not even when he was sent down to St. Charles by the judge of the Juvenile Court. With characteristic determination—that same will to win which later led to such complete success—Dinty escaped from the institution the first night.

His was no easy fight, you must know. Dinty had not been born with any silver-plated revolver in his mouth. Where other lads enjoyed the benefits which come with birth and early training, Dinty was forced to beat his own way to the top against handicaps that would have conquered a less stout heart than his. No Fagin taught the struggling Dinty the fine points of the crooksmen's art. Indeed, his own father, a patrolman traveling out of the Deering Street Station, turned against him.

As though his path had not been sufficiently beset with obstacles, the ambitious young lad was harassed by Miss Goldrina Poppendecker, who took up social service work as a substitute for the spouse who failed to materialize.

She called this work her "first and only love," but there was a grim look in her eyes when she said it.

Miss Poppendecker became acquainted with Dinty on his third appearance in the Juvenile Court. Already his efforts were bearing fruit, for he had achieved the distinction of being known as a "particularly flagrant case," and as such he was discussed by the Juvenile Welfare division of the Woman's Club. Mrs. Forsythe Gormeley of Lake Shore Drive spoke at length about his precocious criminal record and made considerable reference to "environment" and "heredity" and "the submerged sections of the city." Of course the dear ladies meant well; how could they know that, had President Taft weighed eighty pounds less and knocked a few Jap ambassadors for a goal, Dinty would eventually have become a policeman or an Irish tenor? However—

"He's such an interesting case!" bubbled Miss Poppendecker in the ears of a sad-eyed probation officer.

"Yes, I know," grunted the latter. "He nearly bit my thumb off yesterday."

"Such a virile looking little chap!" murmured Miss Poppendecker rhapsodically. There was a faint smile on her face; a far-away look lurked behind her heavy spectacles. "I think I could lead him to higher things. I think I could make a man of Dinty."

She spoke to the judge about her great vision; and His Honor, after judicially considering her social prominence and the desirability of the Woman's Club's endorsement at the next election, paroled Dinty into Miss Poppendecker's custody.

She led him proudly from the courtroom.

"My, what a strong little fellow you are!" she gushed, feeling his biceps stiffen as she touched his arm. This was the way to handle so-called incorrigibles—not to treat them as criminals but as potential Anthony Comstocks, waiting for someone who "understood" to lead them out of darkness. What nobler mission was there than to redeem such a boy? How grateful he would

be, twenty years from now, when he returned home after a day of honest toil at the factory and read the Hearst paper while his wife nursed their fifth child and prepared the corned beef and cabbage!

Such were the thoughts of Miss Poppendecker as they walked down the corridor of the County Building. Again she touched Dinty's arm and felt his muscles involuntarily tense. A little tremor ran through her; she liked to touch his arm. Perhaps—

Miss Poppendecker rejected the half-formed thought with a slight blush and rushed into a fresh paragraph.

"Just think," she cooed. "Some day you may be President of the United States and live in the White House in Washington. Do you know where Washington is, Dinty?"

Dinty squinted sourly up at the visage of his benefactress, shrewdly gauging the distance to her chin. They were nearing the end of the corridor.

"Do you know where hell is?" he countered.

Miss Poppendecker's lips closed primly together, then broke into a sort of smile. She must remember his benighted childhood. She must humor rather than censure him.

"Why, no, Dinty. Where is it?"

"Go there and find out!" snapped the lad. He punctuated his direction with a sharp poke to the jaw, thereby verifying her comment regarding his biceps. This he followed with a left to Miss Poppendecker's midriff—and then darted through the door into Clark Street.

Thus, with characteristic directness and singleness of purpose, he dealt with all impediments that came across his path. It was his dauntless, unconquerable spirit, recognizing no obstacle which stood between him and success. It was Dinty's will to power.

II

ANOTHER year passed, a year fraught with accomplishment. Nothing, apparently, could stop this young lad with

such insatiable ambition. He had hitched his auto to a star and, although only fourteen years old, had filled that auto—stolen from the Michigan Avenue parking space—with as promising a gang of young bandits as ever guzzled moonshine. The papers began referring to him as “Jesse James” Maloney, and as such he had already made the first page of the Hearst morning paper.

“Just wait,” boasted Dinty, carefully folding the clipping and putting it in his pocket. “I’ll make ’em buy a set of *real* big type before I get through wit’ this town. I’ll show Big Mike and Red Schmidt they’re a bunch of pikers.”

Two weeks later he committed his first murder. It was not much of a homicide. Looking back on it in after years, Dinty had to smile at his amateurish technique; but at the time it made him immensely proud and happy. Nor did the newspapermen seem to realize what a slipshod job had been done, for they opened up their first pages and elephantine fonts just as though the corpse of Dinty’s victim had been a masterpiece of the slayman’s art. It was a bad error in judgment, much as if the dramatic critics of those same journals had expressed their approval of “Abie’s Irish Rose” or “Thank You.”

That first murder was important, however, for it marked Dinty as an outstanding figure, as a youth from whom great things were to be expected. Another well-directed bullet or two, and his name would be made. Nothing could keep him from attaining the pinnacle of success, unless—

The last great test was coming, the test which would determine whether Dinty was to rise or fall. The United States had entered the war; on every hand the flower of the nation was budding out in O. D. and squads-right. Two members of Dinty’s gang had already enlisted. The patriotic fever was catching.

“Come on along an’ show these hicks how to shoot,” urged the bandit pair.

Dinty hesitated. He had come to the crisis of his career. Should he yield to

temptation and, fighting in the battle for democracy, become one of those forthcoming *Saturday Evening Post* heroes who returned from France with a grim determination to “go straight”? Should he forget all his cherished ideals and ambitions?

Once more the old never-say-die spirit surged up in Dinty.

“No,” he snapped. “I’ll stick here in Chi and do my bit getting Liberty Bonds.”

Before the war was over Dinty had taken over more than \$100,000 worth of bonds—and killed three men doing it. His other war work consisted in fatally injuring a Y. M. C. A. secretary who was just about to leave for France, and in boring a hole through Red Schmidt’s heart as he was partaking of pretzels—in the back room of Martin’s place. This latter *pièce* of homicide was the culmination of a feud between Dinty and his former idol. It created a tremendous stir in the Middle West and gained the boy, still in his teens, the title of Chicago’s gunman ace.

Yes, Dinty had become a celebrity at less than twenty. Editorials were written about him, saying nasty things of the police for not catching him. The chief personally directed the manhunt. The state’s attorney issued a statement. The coroner prepared a complete summary of Dinty’s victims. There was talk of organizing a band of vigilantes.

When he was finally captured in a running gun battle along Prairie Avenue, the newspapers buried the President’s speech on page 2 to print on page 1 what Dinty said when the dicks closed in on him. It was a great triumph for Chicago’s gunman ace. From his cell in the county jail he contemplated his achievements in happy retrospect. Proudly he read the accounts in the various papers. Never in his life—not even when he killed his first man—had Dinty been so contented.

For he had finally become a Tremendous Somebody. Fellow prisoners, including petty murderers awaiting their

day of execution, eyed him in awed admiration. The jail guards spoke to him with respectful deference.

"How goes it, Dinty?" one would say. "Have a good snooze last night?"

"Naw, that Wop over there in the corner made too dam' much noise snoring. I'll cut his snorer out for him one of these days."

"Just wait. I'll fix him," the jail guard would say, and the next instant his voice was raised in harsh abuse of the sterterous Wop.

Among the prisoners whose cells opened upon the bull-pen in which Dinty exercised was one "Lucky Jack" Muldoon, who had been associated with Dinty in some of his earlier enterprises. Lucky Jack was awaiting trial for a paltry stickup job, but Dinty, the soul of democracy, did not scorn him on that account. Instead, he took him into his confidence.

"You know, Jack, my name's better known in Chicago than what the mayor's is. I can get columns in the poipers, with pitchers, where the mayor can only rate a coupla inches. But outside the state I ain't so famous."

"Well, when you swing—"

The stickup man's words of cheer were interrupted by an impatient shrug of Dinty's shoulders.

"I ain't going to swing—yet. That's just what I'm coming to. You and me are going to lamb out of this joint to-night. Think of the smell it'll raise—and you'll horn in on the fame, too. Have the poipers all got your pitcher on file?"

Dinty's plan of escape worked perfectly, except that it was necessary to kill two guards instead of one. This extra slaughter merely added to the success of the venture, however. Next morning the newspapers shrieked with the sensation. One gathered the impression, after glancing at a newsstand, that the type was hoarse. There were diagrams and photographs and columns of descriptive detail. Rewards were offered. Indignant citizens stormed.

What is more to the point, the tale carried over the wires to other cities.

Dinty made a personal investigation on this score by burglarizing a clipping bureau a week following the jail delivery. Eagerly he scanned the lengthy stories; happily he gloated over the repetition of his name.

"There's just one, two things more to do, and then I'm ready to retire," he told Lucky Jack Muldoon. "I'm going to kill the President."

"Huh? What you got against him?"

"Nothing at all," chirped Dinty. "But that's the best way I know of gettin' big publicity—either murdering him or Hearst. Hearst's poipers has been so good to me, though, that I sorta hate to kill him off."

Cruel disappointment came to the famous slayman that afternoon. He had a habit of glancing through all editions in order to keep in touch with his own activities; for sometimes, he found, he would be surrounded by the police in St. Paul or Denver, with his capture a matter of imminent moment, and he would be entirely unaware of the danger. All of the Chicago journals had excellent telegraph service, and by purchasing them Dinty was able to follow his movements.

On this particular afternoon he happened to read, in an adjacent column, that the President had sailed for France accompanied by Fourteen Points. So disheartened was he that he went forth and, in a fit of despondency, slew a prominent judge. Tears of chagrin gleamed in his eyes as he pulled the trigger, and the policeman who arrested him noted with wonder that he was sobbing.

Dinty recovered somewhat from his grief when he saw the morning papers. Then he was able to salvage some of the escaped glory by coolly confessing his intention of murdering the President at the first opportunity. That set the telegraph wires ajingle with a maddening crowd of dots and dashes, and also made good copy for the Paris and London papers. By nightfall Dinty, in his cell, was jubilant.

"Now there's just one thing left to crown me career," he chuckled, "and

that's something I don't even have to work for."

Yes, it was just a matter of weeks before Dinty would receive his great reward, the guerdon of success toward which he had been working all these years. Soon his fondest dreams would be realized. Soon he would stand upon the gallows, the focus of the nation's eyes.

His would be no picayune sort of hanging, you may be sure, no mere strangling affair such as had been Big Mike Carrigan's. A statesman must be truly great before his funeral attracts tremendous public attention; even so must a murderer show surpassing genius if his execution is to command the nation's attention. Dinty's life had been a shining example of what grim determination and unflagging ambition, coupled with a great keenness of vision, can do for a man. And now, at twenty, he was about to reap the reward.

Dinty's last hours were the happiest he had ever spent. The newspapers were shrieking in ecstatic anticipation. The chief of police was throwing a heavy guard about the jail and making statements to the press. The sheriff was personally doing the rope marketing and making statements. The state's attorney was congratulating the jury and making statements. The head of the Crime Commission was congratulating the state's attorney and making statements. The mayor was making statements. The aldermen were making statements.

Dinty himself was called upon to make a statement. Instead of proclaiming his innocence and issuing the usual warning to young boys against the insidious dangers of the poolroom, he informed the reporters that he would issue his message to the world when he stood on the gallows trap in the morning.

"I expect to see all you guys there," he grinned. "I ain't had no previous 'sperience getting topped, but I think the show'll be a success just the same. Wish I had a drink to give you birds," he added, as a sudden feeling of fellow-

ship for these scribes overwhelmed him. After all he owed a great part of his fame to their untiring efforts and undaunted imagination. Even at that moment a new "extra," telling of a rumored plot to deliver Dinty on the eve of his execution, was spilling from the presses!

The gallows was tested at 8 p. m. As the boom of the trap sounded through the jail and the wail of the prisoners rose in snarling answer, a smile of utter contentment twisted Dinty's mouth. Only a few hours more and he would retire at the apex of a brilliant career.

III

CUSTOM decrees that executions in Cook County shall take place on Friday.

Some say it's because a certain crucifixion occurred on that day; while others, disputing this contention, point out that a resurrection of the criminal on Sunday would be both indecent and wicked. The truth of the matter seems to be, however, that most spectators prefer to have their appetites spoiled on fish day than at any other time of the week.

Dinty began the death march at 8:11 a. m. He was laughing happily, for he had just overheard the sheriff remark that the streets outside the jail were jammed with people. When he came to the trap he smiled down at the crowd of official witnesses and called greetings to several reporters whom he recognized. He glanced casually at the dangling noose and winked at the priest, about to intone a soothing verse from the Psalms. Then he accepted the sheriff's customary invitation to say a last word.

Dinty talked for fifteen minutes, while the scribes feverishly scribbled down below and the jail attachés shifted their feet and coughed. Rapidly he ran through the highlights of his career, taking up his numerous murders one by one and commenting briefly on each.

"I consider the Jorgenson killing me best piece of work," he declared affably, "although there is them who claims I

done a better job on Red Schmidt. It's too dam' bad the President had to go joyriding over to Paris when he did, or else I'd shown you birds some *real* killing. I intended to be President once meself, but I changed me mind. I ain't never had a minute of regret since."

Then Dinty launched into a technical discussion of homicide, giving especial attention to the firearms branch of the art. He was about to elaborate his theory that bullets are more efficacious than either poison or knives, when he perceived that some of the reporters were growing nervous. Evidently, if he continued his last words, Dinty would miss the first editions.

Instantly the intellectual dissertation was curtailed. The young man briefly thanked the members of the press for their splendid co-operation, and smiled happily as the rope and mask were adjusted. It was his supreme moment of triumph, a moment which thousands of presses throughout the country would soon be impressing upon millions of two-penny papers.

"Cr-r-r-rttt, boom!" spoke the trap, and simultaneously Dinty retired from business.

It so chanced that a friend of the writers died on that same Friday. He was only an honest physician who had not performed more than two criminal operations in all his life, and consequently the papers printed a six-line obituary about his passing. On any other day, to be sure, they might have run as many as a dozen lines, but with the hanging of Dinty Maloney on their hands they didn't have much space.

At any rate, this friend got in touch with me about two weeks after his death. Communicating through a medium who, somehow or other, always reminds me of Miss Poppendecker, he told about his experience following

dissolution. After mentioning how embarrassed he felt during his funeral, when the bishop was saying such extravagant lies about him, he went on about the trip to the next world.

"There was quite a throng of us in the party," he said, "among those present being several clergymen—fine, God-fearing souls who had dedicated their entire lives to Uplift with a capital U. Then there was a celebrated French botany professor, a former United States senator, a close friend of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's, and Dinty Maloney, the murderer. These, of course, constituted only a small percentage of the Friday consignment of souls. At the gate we found a sort of Ellis Island arrangement, with St. Peter and his assistants checking in the arrivals according to a set immigration ratio—so many Americans, so many Czechoslovaks, etc.

"Well," continued my friend, "I happened to be standing between the murderer and one of the clergymen. Suddenly I noticed a stir among the assistants at the gate. They were gazing in our direction with a curious expression of mingled awe and admiration on their faces. Then one of the angels rushed forward.

"'Why, Dinty Maloney!' he exclaimed heartily. 'Welcome to our city! You don't know how anxious we've all been to meet the man who sent so many souls up here. St. Peter will be tickled pink to see you.'

"In his haste to grasp Dinty's hand the angel had trod all over my feet. He shouldered me brusquely aside and told the clergyman to make way. Then—

"'The American quota for Friday is already filled, Dinty, but I'll smuggle you in,' said the angel. He turned once more and faced the crowd. 'The rest of you Americans can go to hell,' he cried."



The Higher Learning in America

XII

The University of Pennsylvania

By Miffin Crane

I

FROM the begrimed structure of the Elevated at Thirty-Second Street a diagonal thoroughfare, notable with ugliness, descends to Spruce. Its ugliness consists in the soot that invests its flanking brick buildings, in the charmless unadornment of these buildings and the touch of time upon them, which, imparting no loveliness of decay, has simply reduced them to senility.

This is the approach to the University of Pennsylvania; it is down this diagonal street that one walks from the railroad station at West Philadelphia, and coming to Spruce Street, discovers College Hall and its campus.

An unworthy approach, or, perhaps, an approach that accentuates by its squalor the graciousness of College Hall. College Hall is emphatic with charm. Its granite, in Tudor Gothic arrangement, is grown over with ivy, the ivy mounts the tower, descends along the ledges, covers the sills, frames the windows and invests the roofs. Even in the winter a thick texture of interlacing stems conceals a large surface of the stone.

In summer the building seems to grow out of the earth, to be a splendid efflorescence of the season. Contributory to this effect is the appropriate setting. The immediate campus is a garden of trees, shrubbery and grass. A semicircular drive and walk leads, from two entrances on the street, to the door. Through this door, giving ingress to

College Hall, pass Freshmen on the business of matriculation. College Hall contains the executive staff of the University. Therein the provost has his office. The traditions of the faculty find preservation and enforcement within this building. To it a luckless instructor would be summoned, following some rash presumption upon his liberty of speech, for reprimand or dismissal.

For, of course, there have been such reprimands and dismissals at Pennsylvania; the Trustees of Pennsylvania guard the prejudices of their class as securely as do trustees at other learned institutions. In respect to the conduct and viewpoints of its trustees Penn is not individual; it is of a type. The rash mind, the radical interloper in the faculty, must be restrained. Learning and investigation may travel far, but there are routes prescribed for the journey, ways provided, fixed tracks laid down. This is the manner at Penn, as elsewhere.

Concerning dismissals, I clearly recall the excitement that flared with the Scott Nearing case. What was it that Dr. Nearing said; what was the substance of his heresy? That I cannot remember; no matter—it was doubtless a quite mild one as heresies go currently. But for the moment Philadelphia was convulsed, the newspapers were afire, and editorial denunciation was raging. What! a professor dared an unorthodox remark! He had somehow betrayed a trust. He had poisoned Mother Penn and tainted her milk and

the student babes suckled at her breasts. It was monstrous.

But Penn, built of stone and clad in ivy, sustained the quake. I learned, lately, a curious local denouement to the Nearing case. I was in conversation with a young reporter of news for a Philadelphia daily and he mentioned an assignment to a lecture delivered in Philadelphia by Dr. Nearing.

I was not aware, I told him, that Dr. Nearing had delivered a lecture in Philadelphia. Yes, he delivered a lecture, responded the young reporter, but the newspapers gave it no space.

I inquired the reason of that, and he told me of a conversation with his editor. He had returned from the assignment and the city editor asked:

"Did anything happen?"

"Well," replied the young reporter, "Nearing said that—"

"Wait!" interjected the City Editor. "Did they hiss, did they boo, did they throw anything at the speaker? If not, we will print nothing about this lecture."

Silence for the unorthodox; let its existence be ignored. Much is ignored within the academic halls at Penn. It is better, in dealing with youth athirst for knowledge, to ignore than to condemn, for condemnation might awaken curiosity; a virulent disease. Suppose the four thousand matriculated students at Penn should suddenly be made insatiate with curiosity; what bulwark of accepted opinion could prevail and stand against their rowdy assault?

It is the function of Penn to lull them, not to arouse them. Late in September these youths converge upon Philadelphia like diffuse rays brought to a focus. Some of them come because their fathers came, although the tradition of going to Penn is not as powerful as is the tradition of going to Harvard or Princeton or Cornell or Yale. Others come on parental compulsion. The reasons of coming are diverse, but a few of the arrivals come with an exciting illusion—the illusion that curious, significant learning will presently be accorded them.

These are the dangerous students; these are the students that Penn must carefully mold. Little by little their wings must be clipped; they must not soar; they must learn the proper pedestrian way. You cannot proscribe everything, of course; there are even obvious dangers incorporate with the curriculum itself. Thus, for instance, they must, in Freshman English Literature, hear something of Geoffrey Chaucer, and no doubt they will in secret read the *Reve's Tale*, but a professor can antidote that poison. When the rhythmic swing of an obscene line begins to urge the student, pull him short upon the bit of a grammatical query, or an Anglo-Saxon reference. Make him scan the line, parse it, and show the derivations of the words. He will shortly be done with Chaucer and one slough of the pilgrimage will have been circumvented.

All the American universities are eminent with morality, but Penn, it seems to me, is pre-eminent. It was conceived immaculately, in the odor of sanctity, by Benjamin Franklin. Various endowments have been expended upon its growth, but Franklin's endowment endures unspent. He conferred upon Penn his noble genius for moral platitude. Now comes Major-General Leonard Wood to sustain the tradition.

II

THE acting Provost of Penn is Dr. Penniman of the English Department. The General was appointed Provost over a year ago but, due to a moral mission in the Philippines, he has not yet occupied his office. It is curious of the Philipinos—they are strangely blind to the benevolence of our government. But General Wood is the inheritor of Roosevelt, and he will ultimately persuade them, with the help of God and the army.

This done, we will see the General as Provost at Penn. I am told that a new renaissance impends; it is said that America is about to flower with learning and art. Pennsylvania, one of our great institutions of learning, will in-

evitably assume its important rôle in this process of national exfoliation. The General arrives opportunely. From the learned halls of Penn he will re-enunciate the Rooseveltian saga; he is a portent of the predicted renaissance. Indeed, I might say, he defines it, he determines its character.

But the General, while he will fully maintain the traditional correctness of Penn's morality, will perhaps be in other ways an innovator. Heretofore, Penn has been dignified to the point of extinction. Penn has effaced itself; it has preserved an austere silence. Is a professor of Penn ever quoted in the national news? Do Penn professors ever shock with platitude spoken with audacious accent? The last instance was a decade ago when Dr. Goodspeed, of the Randall Morgan Laboratory, having experimented through a humid summer with alleged methods of "soul photography," announced in the fall that "soul photography is rot."

These were strong words, but they were safe at the time. The learned doctor, whatever his private conviction, would doubtless hesitate in publicly framing them today. Today is another day; the times have changed. The English have been here. Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle have graced and edified our shores; we have reverentially looked upon the photographic soul of Raymond. In short, soul photography has the imprimatur of Great Britain and dissenters must be wary.

The University of Pennsylvania, however, has never had the character of dissent, and stands in no danger of rising, like some terrible heretical Luther, to denounce established forms. In fulfilling the function of a university, Penn, I think, is unsurpassed. The function of a University is to protect youth from ideas, and it seems doubtful that there is another university in the land so qualified for this task.

A single inspired and articulate man on the faculty is sufficient to thwart the purpose of any university. Providence has guarded the faculty of Penn, keep-

ing it sweet with mediocrity, and Penn has been spared disaster. Many youths have entered Penn with an indigestion of ideas, but Penn has ministered to these, and washed them clean of ideas.

Genius, we know, serves itself, and subsists upon food of its own providing. Now, while genius is rare, the illusion of genius is somewhat common. There are many youths who propose immense accomplishment, who dream dangerously of impossible achievement. The authentic genius is not likely to reach Penn, for he will discover pastures more lush than the campus. The campus, however, experiences the tread of these others who are mad with illusion. It medicines their fever and in the end they are cured.

Only yesterday, I wandered through a great museum of art and in a colossal room, where replicas of Greek and Roman sculpture are contained, I found nearly a dozen boys copying the sculptures on white paper. They were the students of an art school, and when I looked at their faces I thought what a grievous thing was the art school, how it sustained them in mad illusion, how it increased their malady instead of providing antidote. Unlucky youths! They should be at Penn. Freshman English would reduce the fever, and Sophomore composition would cure it.

Houston Hall, I must not forget to mention, would also contribute its influence to the healing process. The new student, the matriculate, is no doubt at first curious of Houston Hall. His curiosity is brought to a pitch in the Bursar's office, where, paying the academic fees for the year, the tuition, the matriculation fee, the laboratory deposit, etc., he discovers an exaction of twenty dollars for membership in the Houston Club. There is no escape from this fee; it is as inexorable as a writ of restraint. Every male student, save those in the summer school and the evening classes, is by compulsion a member of the Houston Club.

The club has its being in Houston Hall, another edifice of gracious stone and ivy, somewhat withdrawn from the

street. The club is a moral institution. Its function is to furnish a place of wholesome recreation for the youth. It is, in effect, a college Y.M.C.A., containing billiard rooms, bowling alleys and such like attractions. There is a great chamber housing the athletic trophies of Penn, silvered cups of various dimensions whose engraved legends of athletic exploit awaken the desiderate emotions of patriotism in the beholder.

The method of recruiting the membership of the Houston Club always seemed to me strictly American; it always expressed to me a fundamental faith of the American soul. There was a time when grace and goodness might be had of the Lord, but the American, perceiving the Lord busy with the detail of a complex universe and sometimes remiss in the conferring of righteousness, has discovered a precise method whereby morals became a function of the police. I refer to our excellent system of establishing morality by legislation. At Penn this system is applied by legislating the student a member of the Houston Club.

The thought occurs to me that a similar legislation might be made in favor of the Y.M.C.A.'s at large. Congress might well enact a new draft, whereby all male citizens, between certain ages—say from thirteen to ninety—would be conscripted to the Y.M.C.A., and taught virtue under soldierly discipline. The thing might be effected by something more than a Congressional Act. Why not a nineteenth amendment, with enforcement agents armed with John Doe writs?

I think the people at large would accept such a conscription without any undue departure from their customary docility. Certainly the students of Penn make little complaint of the Houston Club draft. I have never seen it denounced in *The Pennsylvanian*, albeit this is a journal of indignation. Nor does *The Punch Bowl* make satiric witticisms about it.

The Pennsylvanian is published from a building on Woodland Avenue, opposite the campus. Through a bulk win-

dow one can peer between the fossil memoirs of immemorial flies at a linotype operator punching his keyboard in the daily business of setting up the paper. The editors compose the copy upstairs. For the past several seasons *The Pennsylvanian* has taken its tone from the football situation. In the main it is a situation that has caused much lamentation.

The current students at Penn are, it seems, apathetic to the football team. Head Coach Heisman specifically declared this apathy at the conclusion of last year's disastrous season. The dolorous defeats of Penn left the student body unmoved to any helpful determination. Indeed, of late years, the vast student body seems scarcely aware of Penn's athletic activity. To them, athletics might well be some esoteric pursuit like the studying of Sanscrit or the calculation of electronic potentials.

I explain this by saying that Penn becomes, year by year, increasingly democratic, admits a larger and larger body of students, maintains night courses and a sort of summer chautauqua and so declines in that quality of distinctive flavor that inspires athletic accomplishment.

Only a minor percentage of the great student body lives, for instance, in the dormitories. These charming Tudor buildings, a connected group of thirty-one individual houses, contain but a nucleus of the students. The others, the majority, live everywhere in Philadelphia; the business of renting rooms to students is the chief occupation of boarding-house mistresses throughout the city.

Boarding-house mistresses are somewhat exacting; rooms are rented ceremoniously in Philadelphia. One must supply references. This is, I say, a ceremony; the references are never verified. Now, it is a reference in itself to be a student at Penn, and through this fortunate fact individuals who are poor in referential invention may secure rooms without difficulty. There are many avowed Penn students living in Philadelphia whose only acquaintance

with Latin is a familiarity with the *procès verbal* of inconvenient writs of *habeas corpus* or *mittimus*.

Of course, a knowledge of Latin is no longer common to the veritable Penn student, as it is no longer common to other university students. Penn has its scientific schools in which no Latin is taught. The Towne Scientific School, embodied in the Randall Morgan Laboratory of Physics and the Harrison Laboratory of Chemistry, acquaints matriculates with the law of Newton and the principles of Dalton.

My last impression of the Morgan Laboratory dates from last summer, when I enjoyed the hospitality of the laboratory in making a certain experiment with a bottled gas; I was searching spectroscopically for the gaseous element Helium in the mixture. I take it that Dr. Goodspeed, in making his celebrated investigation into soul photography, found little necessity for the use of rubber tubing in his experiments, for I discovered the laboratory piteously wanting in these flexible pipes wherewith to connect the orifices of glass tubes.

If a, perhaps temporary, lack of gum-hose characterizes the Randall Morgan Laboratory, the distinguishing feature of the Harrison Laboratory is a slight but insistent odor of hydrogen sulphide, emanating from defective generators in the hydrogen sulphide rooms and transpiring, in delicate feter, throughout the building.

These two institutions of scientific investigation have always assumed the general reticence that is, so to speak, the soul of Penn. In their relations with the outer scientific world they are austere and silent. One searches, week by week, the Abstract Journal of the American Chemical Society and discovers therein communications from Yale, Harvard, Princeton, Chicago, Michigan, Johns Hopkins, etc., but never from Penn. There is, it appears, a delicate punctillio in the conduct of these laboratories at Penn. There is, perhaps, a tradition. Probably it would violate that tradition, it would consti-

tute an indelicacy, for a scientific discovery to come out of them.

Of indelicacies, Penn is wary. I know of nothing indelicate within the academic shade save, perhaps, the sculptures modeled by Dr. McKenzie from the youths of the gymnasium. Dr. McKenzie has his being in the Gymnasium because he is director of the Department of Physical Instruction. Betimes, he models youths from the clay. They pose in his studio which is located above the gymnasium.

When first I met the Doctor he was engaged upon a memorial statue to a young British soldier slain in France. With a fascinating courtesy he exhibited this and other figures, capably executed with a somewhat unimaginative fidelity to life. Many of the figures were nudes, but as these nudes were youths, Penn permitted their making.

All the male students of Penn are physically educated as a part of the curriculum. The classes gather in the gym where the atmosphere has the slight butyric acidity of human bodies. Attired in a special costume, they form in ranks and, in concert with the instructor, they raise and lower small wooden dumb-bells clasped tightly to the palms of their hands. Some leap upon padded monsters resembling huge sawbucks, others run hastily around a circular track of cushioned leather, small groups ascend and descend upon polished ladders like hod-carriers in a delirium. The class is concluded; the students emerge from instruction in physical education and find it pleasant to breathe the fresh air of the campus.

III

THE campus, or rather that portion of the campus comprehended in Franklin Field, was one time the scene of an annual contention between the Freshman and Sophomore classes known as the Bowl Fight. The bowl fight inaugurated the academic year. It was a hardy riot in which the perspirations students played at a game without any rules. Only such clothes as might be offered

sacrificially to the destructive rigors of the game were worn by the contenders. The object was to lay hands upon a bowl, which was the nucleus of contention. A few years ago one student was unfortunate; he failed to survive the game. Due to this fatality it was abolished by faculty decree.

Of course the co-eds never took part in the bowl fight, nor are they conscripted for physical education or the Houston Club. They are a faint, shrill overtone to the university life. Their voice is lost in the multitude of other voices; nevertheless, they carry on a particular clamor. The co-eds at Penn clamor for their rights. They are envious; they envy the prodigality with which the needs of the males are provided, contrasting it with their own lean provision.

The co-eds live in no gracious dormitories cloaked in ivy and glamorous with Gothic towers. They are housed in a meagre structure on Thirty-fourth street, two joined dwellings painted a chaste white. Within this building they are strictly regulated as to their hours of departure and arrival. Years ago I was myself made aware of the stern limitations of this schedule when, for a period, I called upon a co-ed occupying these dormitories. She was a maiden of some allure, but in the end my ardor could not survive the aridity of her setting. Glamor expired like summer foliage on a frosty night.

Co-eds are more numerous at Penn during these latter years. More courses have been opened to them. The studious youths are not distracted, however, by their presence; mainly, they are not beautiful. They have determined, serious faces, and the burden of sober learning gives them an appropriate plainness. Their favorite study, the branch of most frequent election, is psychology. They speak of it eagerly, somewhat defiantly; one suspects a flavor concupiscential.

Will the co-eds achieve their rights when the General arrives from his Philippine mission? It is possible, for the immortal strategist of San Juan

Hill, protagonist of the General, would have heeded their cries. But what rights must be accorded? The General will decide. He may achieve the popularity of a Hobson; think of him besieged upon the campus, ambushed by the maids fresh from Psychology II, his mortar-board hat rakishly awry from the osculatory violence of his reception.

I have mentioned the General and a few others; there are hundreds in the faculty but one cannot name them all. Nevertheless, as a sort of symbolic personage, as a figure representative of Penn, its importance, its purpose, its dignity, I must select one individual from the non-student body whose importance makes him typical. I must mention this individual so that the higher learning may be measured by him, may have its dimensions circumscribed in his person.

Shall it be the General? Might not Dr. Penniman serve? What of Professor Dr. Rolfe of the Latin Department? Dr. Quinn, Dean of the College, suggests himself. One thinks of the Blanchard Professor of Chemistry, Dr. Taggart. Names that suggest profundity and learning pass in review. It is a difficult selection, it is a search made arduous not by lack of candidates but by their very plenty.

In his great novel of the Corn Belt, which I have been granted privy examination in manuscript, Laertes Ravenshaw speaks often of the "outstanding individual." He refers to the great seed boars, the great breeding machines of the Corn Belt. The outstanding individual is typical of a race, a dynasty. Great Orion Colossus is the outstanding individual of the Corn Belt.

Who is the outstanding individual of Penn. Who typifies the academic importance?

I pass a century of names in review until I come, arrestingly, to that of Kolb. Kolb is of the campus, but not exactly of the faculty. Nevertheless, he is close-knit to Penn, woven into the fabric as anyone of the faculty.

A generation of students have known

him. He maintains his office directly opposite the dormitories. Titularly he designates himself as Kolb the Tailor. He is the sartorial refurbisher of the student body. He is the professor of sartorial perfections. He wears upon his face an adornment that has made him known and remembered. The excellences of his tailoring may, perhaps, be equaled elsewhere, but the moustaches of Kolb the Tailor are without equal. They are esoteric and unapproachable. Two great tusks of entwined hair jut tremendously from his upper lip like the fangs of a behemoth.

I am sensible that Professor Kolb has many rivals for the honor I accord him. The impressive scholarship of learned men vies with his impressive moustaches, but cannot quite outvie them. They cannot be denied. All the dignity of Penn finds expression in their wonderful extension. I find them typical. They measure the importance of the academy to the outer world, to life and science and art. Kolb the Tailor is their father.

In the phrase of the Corn Belt I nominate Kolb the Tailor as the outstanding individual of the University of Pennsylvania.



Epitaph

By R. Lynn Riggs

LET them say this of me—
If they say anything:
"Whether God or the devil ordained it,
He must sing!

"Color of wind and morning,
Color of dusk and word,
Sound of the storming sea-waves,
Sounds unheard—

"Of these were his song articulate
In great or less degree.
He has been happy—he will be happy
Forgotten utterly."



PROVIDENCE gave us the conscience. Nature gave us the headache.



Original Sin

By Goldsmith Riley

NORMAN sat by his mother's side at the moving picture show. His twelve-year-old eyes followed the educational film with some brightening of interest as it revealed the process of converting tobacco from the field into the finished cigar. His mother's face grew tight as she also watched it. She said to her neighbor on the other side that she must see the owner of the theatre about the more careful selection of the educational films. But a moment later, as the Feature was announced, her face again settled into its well-trained lines of predetermined sweet placidity.

Of this part of the program she could be sure. She herself was a member of the local censorship committee that sifted out any embers of sin overlooked by the National, the State and the County boards of censorship, so that only the ultimately pure should be served to the inhabitants of Boynton, Pa. They could go to the picture shows with every confidence that they would see no scenes depicting hatred, intense fear, Bathing Girls, jealousy, revenge, intrigue, unfaithfulness, indecency, superstition, Sex, irreverence, cruelty, lawlessness, ridicule of officers or disregard for law and Government, or any other of the entire list of taboo items.

As the mother of a growing boy, she was very conscientious about the matter. It was difficult, but she did her duty. For instance, it had taken considerable thought, and, she complacently told herself, no little talent to fix the scene now being enacted on

the screen before them, when the villain, in a Western barroom, held a glass of liquor high in one hand. The subtitle had originally read "Here's to Crime!" She had changed it to make the villain say instead, "This is excellent ginger ale!" With much of the succeeding rough action deleted, the title fitted in very satisfactorily, she thought. . . .

This work, however, was only in line with her whole policy toward Norman. As an enlightened member of the New Thought movement, she was raising her boy with the whole idea of impressing upon him that there is No Such Thing As Sin. Thus would he be started securely on the Life Beautiful. No Evil Influence was allowed to disturb this ideal. . . . She felt very virtuous as she watched the final scene, which she had ordered cut just *before* the hero clasped the heroine in his arms for a lingering kiss which she was glad she had spared the tender young Norman. . . .

As they filed out of the theatre, greeting friends and neighbors, they met the pastor and his wife. A delicious tingle accented every vertebra of her spine as she thought the pastor held her hand much more warmly and a trifle longer than was necessary in greeting. A beautiful picture, he told her. Absolutely nothing in it that she could not safely take Norman to see.

That night Norman set fire to his home and killed his grandmother. In answer to their hysterical demands as to why he did it, he said he wanted a little excitement.

“Things”

By Amanda Hall

I

HE walked in the fields, the misogynist, with a dark frown for the whitest of flowers. All about him spread the rust, the blood stains, the gold of autumn—a tapestry too colossal for galleries, too detailed and marvelously wrought to be ever faithfully reproduced. As he moved, the Queen Anne’s lace blew against his legs with a suggestion of fawning artlessness, the ruddy sumach stood out stiff and gauche to impede him, as a child that says, “Notice me,” the goldenrod dusted him generously with pollen. And a half mile away, beyond the purple heather-like drifts of the flower called “bone-set” was the sea, as candid in its way as the fields caught in the evolution of autumn. The sea was discovered broadly and innocently blue.

But the man—his name was Adam Wicke—only pulled his hat a little lower over his brow and regarded it with a grudging, screw-eyed gaze that should have taken the conceit out of even so impervious an element as ocean. Some ugly cinder thing in the pupil of his eye smudged and distorted his clear field of vision. But because Wicke was new to hatred, disgust and general warping, his eyes had not quite that successful hardness they would wear later. They seemed at the point of tears. But to preclude that possibility he kicked out in all directions, made absurd gestures in his soul, and struck such a savage pace through the grass and wild raspberries that they clawed at his ankles resentfully.

He reached the sea and humped on

a rock and let his look plunge abysmally beneath the frivolling waves. He was forty, successful and married, and that morning his wife had asked him for a string of pearls. And the request, because of the long sequence of similar ones, had precipitated him into hatred for her. She had asked him for a string of pearls and his success and his marriage had clarified themselves for him as the travesty they were. Though, of course, the conclusion was not arrived at so simply as it sounds. Hatred was no sudden explosion; it was the blare at the end of a long time fuse. Subconsciously he had expected it. “Now I should like a string of pearls,” said his wife, who had really the neck to wear them, and fizz—the combustion—hatred!

And Adam Wicke on his rock, composing his face for the expression it must wear more or less consistently the remainder of his life. Wicke was old-fashioned and a stubborn sentimentalist, and this is one of the things that happen to sentimental men. They go out from a meagre upbringing with their hands very bare, and they moil and toil at some dark, greasy occupation that puts a crick in their backs and a shutter across the sun. But they see behind the carnivorous machine that they tend an angelic presence in the most ethereal of draperies and know that the lady’s name is “Success.” And reverently they adore her, fill the oil cups and wipe away the sweat from their corrugated foreheads, and dedicate themselves to the long servitude, the arduous courting. And sometimes they win out. A hand touches them on the shoulder and tells them that the time

has come, time to step out from behind the machine and change into a clean shirt and meet the goddess face to face.

But the summoning hand is not snow-light as the man's imaginings have led him to believe, no divine, transforming touch. Rather the summons is almost brutally compelling, a fleshy hand upon him, "Come and be rich!" He goes, shading his dazzled eyes, with a terrible thankfulness and humility because he is about to stand in the presence of his beloved, her who hovered at the north-west corner of his machine, transparent as an angel and smelling most unearthly sweet. But now, lo and behold, she is revealed as buxom; she has a solid waist and she is not transparent, but a mature presence that assumes the ordering of his life. Something of worship falls off, though he recognizes his indebtedness and strives always to appear diverted and polite. Pity Wicke no less because his *chef d'œuvre* chanced to be the manufacturing of tin cans. He lived to find them on every city dump in the world.

The malady of his marriage was identical with his ailment of success. With all the sublime beauty of his dreamer's soul, with all the iron of his masculine egotism, he wanted his wife to be without material substance. He had married her for her slim throat and inaccessible eyes, partly too because of her delicate health, and he had built up a picture of delicious devotion on her part and complete monopoly on his.

But Kathleen with her meek Botticelli head was twice as much in love with success as he. It was harnessed for her hire. It developed almost ludicrously that she had a born talent for spending money, that in her fragility she was fertile with this one mania. But she spent with the acquisitive passion that feeds restlessly upon spoil and goes always unnourished. Her hollow eyes seemed begging him ceaselessly for succor, the while he sweated to fill her lap with fabulous fruits. She walked with the emaciated figure of a sad nun, telling her jewels like rosaries, lost in a mystic madness that cost poor

Wicke, the tin magnate, a round figure a year. She let their one child die, and gave him no other, gave him nothing of magnitude or worth save her demands which were at first not without a certain value to his vanity.

Till one day dropping the reasonable request for a string of pearls he knew neatly and definitely that he hated her. Yet her hollow-eyed hankering for pearls was a mere bagatelle. She made the request with a *dégagé* air. Heaven knows her lean neck may have felt cold. It wasn't the request—it was—well, who knows what it was? But something in Adam's middle-class consciousness snapped and fell apart. And his good-looking face sagged into profound lines of sadness and he quit her. He went with a desperate haste out of the city and down to a shore property he owned in Rhode Island, a rank paradise, undeveloped, where there was a family of farmers, his tenants. And he descended upon them with the mandate that they keep him for an indefinite time, frightening the women out of their wits and into the kitchen while he stalked morosely down to the sea, in all the pockets of his soul not one penny that he could jingle.

II

THE waves wore in at his feet in a tatter of foam, sucked persuasively round the hollows of rocks, filled the snail-inhabited pools with each miniature tidal wave and withdrew, rattling the pebbles in monotonous music. And Adam sat, holding a courtmartial for women. He had as good a reason as anyone's for hating them, and this was as good a place as another in which to nurse the little viper he had adopted to his bosom.

He was an ordinary fellow, Wicke, with a few simple demands and theories. He knew nothing of philosophy and very little of tolerance. So he could hate without complexity, which is, after all, a blessing. But it was a great pity considering how happy he might have made a woman of the cling-

ing and credulous type and what an enthusiastic father he would undoubtedly have become. But as a misogynist he was without subtlety or any artistic value; sadness made him impotent, heavy and sententious. It was some time before he remarked the child. . . .

She was a little thing, twelve years old, but with the small, undeveloped stature of a girl of nine, hardly anything about her to suggest a woman. Yet she was a woman-child, and Adam, resenting her presence on the sand, showed no subterranean humor. His irritable brow screwed down, he cast his aspersion upon her the while she amused herself with a curious childish efficiency. She wore a skimpy calico frock and no shoes or stockings; and her device was to limp absently about on one leg in a solitary game of hop-sotch. Each time that she hopped her skirt flew up and showed her legs, brown and slim, above the knee. Her arms too were thin and brown with a smooth golden coloring, her face and her small V of neck, and her hair, rather short and curling, was faded as a mongrel's fur.

She played hop-sotch, she gathered shells, she interested herself in the domestic affairs of the snails with a self-sufficiency which might have amused the man had his mood been a flexible one. As it was, when she glanced up and discovered him he vouchsafed her no smile, no gleam, no neighborly word to set her right that he was not a horrid, slug-like creature that had dragged itself up from the sea. She looked and she thought thoughts about him that she kept to herself, and she said a prayer and got over them. Then, because she had a nice, honest, laughing religion, she called "Hello" to him.

"Hello yourself," he said with what was little more than a gleamless civility.

She was a woman and scraped up acquaintance automatically; she would grow up presently, invading whatever Eden she could, making herself hellishly sweet to whatever Adam she encountered, she would foster his sentiment and conceit till he

had paid for her first bonnet.

All cake and calico she approached him, smiling ingratiatingly with her piquant mouth.

"I didn't see you before. . . . Have you been there long?"

"I grew here."

"Like a sea-urchin?"

"Something of the sort. I've been sitting here forever and I'm always going to stay."

She screwed her head to one side, cannily.

"Oh, I don't believe that. I'll tell you what I do believe. You belong at the farm. For to-night that is. And I believe you're Mr. Wicke."

"Do you?"

"Yes, I do."

"Go on believing it, then," he recommended ungraciously.

She gave him a long, searching look; she had eyes as blue as periwinkles, and she flushed.

Then, climbing with tentative confidence along the flank of the rock, she presumed to share it with him, pulling her short skirt severely down over her damp legs with a gesture almost pitifully feminine.

Hmm! Adam looked at her and wondered if she was a pretty little girl, then regarded himself coldly for wondering. She was too young to aid speculation; she was an embryo woman as yet innocent of her own potential guilt.

"And who are you?" he asked at length in a softer tone.

"Rosemary Wren," she answered promptly and added with a half-proud sigh, very comic, "an orphan! I live at the farm too—I'm 'farmed out,' they call it, and I don't have the same name as the Smithers, but I have the same meals, and just as good a bed, and they're bringing me up to be a Seven Day Baptist."

"What is that?"

The child turned upon him with immense animation.

"Don't you know what it is?"

"No."

"Neither do I," she admitted and Adam laughed.

His lips achieved that crack, his mouth that chasm of mirth, but again his expression was clamped and sadder than before.

He knew the Smithers, both by years of intercourse and by reputation. They were thrifty, hard-shelled, hard-working fanatics. They had been known to flog a grown boy because he was found reading a story magazine. They belonged to a nearly obsolete race of ascetics, countenancing no sort of indulgence, whims or foibles, and weeding out the seed of vanity as though it were the devil's planting.

Thinking of them, Adam all but laughed again. If Kathleen, his wife, had grown up in their midst she had perhaps been saved from the detestable soullessness that crushed him. But Kathleen came of the aspiring bourgeoisie. She learned culture with a shallow facility; acquired the technic of self-decoration. And love, that puny, blue-faced babe, she had lifted between thumb and forefinger while it struggled for breath and gingerly deposited it outside in the cold.

Adam looked at the little girl who was an orphan and whose bare gold skin, whose infinite eyes, were her only assets. He wondered if, were a man to rear his own woman according to his own method, his code of rigorous truth, and severity, whether or not it might be possible to evolve one "nearer to the heart's desire," one the superior and not the slave of "things," one as near as possible the creature intended before God's purpose became perverted. Talking to the little girl and testing her integrity, he saw himself as the sublime agent. Her tongue wagged of starfish and sea lore. She was in no way a whimsical or precocious twelve-year old, but when she cleared her hair from her eyes he was shot each time by the cannon of her direct look, by her plump good cheer and her thankfulness (she had spent the first years of her life in an institution) at finding herself taken to the collective bosom of the Smithers family.

The farm offered a variety of diver-

sions. After a storm there was the gathering of the seaweed which they took for fertilizer; there was the season for picking beach plums and wild grapes. From shells she had been taught to make picture frames, from the fluff of the thistle a certain ornamentation that went under glass. All these industries and recreations she described in detail for Wicke where he sat, like Rodin's "Thinker," on his beetling rock. And at last she said.

"And to think you own it all, the shells and the mussels and seaweed, and beach plums and even the thistle." She sighed. "And you could stop us having any of them if you wanted to. It must seem strange to be so rich."

Wicke, with a twitch of the mouth, looked out across his property, an inheritance from his father and worthless so far as the land went, rocky, salt-singed fields only fit for sheep to graze on. He had kept it all these years simply because he had never received an offer for it. And to this child it was a kingdom. The tight ache within him was lessened unexpectedly. He gave her the one sweet smile he had mustered in weeks.

"My child," he said in the low voice of confidence and leaning to her from his eminence, "I am really a very poor man, for the shells and the seaweed and the mussels and every thistle in these fields belong to you," and he added momentarily, "and you are rich because you own the sky too and the cargo of all the ships that pass."

She stared at him simply. She had three freckles on her candid nose, and her orphan's smile was without guile.

But when they came to go home she disappointed him. Finding a long, slithersome length of kelp in the sand she was inspired to wind it about her festively, then let it dangle behind her as a train.

"See here," said Wicke with a swift frown, "why do you do that?"

She lifted a radiant face.

"I play it's a ball gown."

"Ball gown? Pray God you never wear one. . . . Ball gown indeed. . . ."

Femininity. . . . Still, if one began early enough with the right training. . . . He saw his wife walking in her sterile magnificence, the moonglow of the pearls he would soon give her about her throat. . . .

III

At supper Rosemary was told she could not eat with him, but a concession was made at his request. He approved of the starched simplicity of the frock she was made to wear, her thin face shining from soap and water, her curls dragged back from her forehead in a discipline that suggested illness. He approved of the sententious face of Mrs. Smithers, directing her manners at long range. He had come down there so sick, so sick of his dubious bargain of success, his business responsibilities, his multiplied cloying luxuries, his wife's smoldering, querulous face and her demands upon him, sick of the axe-grinding, exquisite persons who were beginning to patronize his fortune.

And here he sat in the tonic tidiness of the farm kitchen beside the accidental bit of humanity who had elected to be his companion, eating plain food, seeing the whip-whip of the curtain at the window, seeing the picture book sea and the cerulean of the child's eyes each time that, with spoon suspended, she looked at him. The family had no diversions in the evening; they risked no meretricious influence of a phonograph. The women knitted, Rosemary Wren grew warm at her spelling lesson, the men sat with odorous pipes and great corded, sheepish hands. They had prayers and there was one which Rosemary was made to say by herself in which she thanked God that, being an orphan, she had found a home. She said it with her eyes rolled to the ceiling . . . her expression one of droll piety. . . . Wicke went out and looked at the moon. But when Rosemary had gone to bed with the spiders under the eaves he addressed the Spartan Mrs. Smithers,

"I'd like to talk to you about that little girl. . . ."

IV

UNDER Adam's supervision Rosemary was reared. According to his dictum her dragons allowed her no liberty. The way he had taken it upon himself to play God was perhaps without parallel in the history of charity. And under his guardianship Rosemary thrived. He kept her at the farm, giving her consistently a selective education under the middle-aged, feminine tutors which he supplied. No nun serving her novitiate was more sedulously guarded than the little girl who had thought that hay fields and sand made him a rich man. So far as he could, he molded her thought through the medium of books and his own tireless doctrine. Though her creator had seen fit to make her pretty he discouraged her looking in a glass; he paid her no compliments that had to do with her appearance. Character . . . character, he hammered home. He censored her dress and insisted that it be kept sensible; he ruthlessly discouraged the gusty little tendencies toward folly which rippled over her like a light breeze. He saw to it that her comforts never exceeded the merely adequate, and in Mrs. Smithers he had a powerful ally.

Above all he withheld anything personal in the way of gifts. She might have reading and she might have music, she might have pictures even to open the panels in her constricting walls. But her acquisitive instinct was never allowed to develop, her congenital longing for the ornamental, the gaudy ribbon or light trinket, "things." . . . He loved her, of course, fiercely and jealously. And his magnificent theory to all intents and purposes was working out. But Nature was wroth with him, and Nature saw to her adornment. . . .

V

IN the years that followed, Adam's domestic life was happy and serene. Because he had the luxury of denying the girl he loved he was ironically willing, even anxious, to indulge the woman

he had married. He gave her enough rope to hang herself and still she did not die. She became instead quite a famous hostess and connoisseur; her flat, willowy figure, draped in its intentionally wicked vestments, was acclaimed as "fascinating," her face of malcontent like a Benda mask was interpreted "mystic." She had, as her husband's wealth increased, two country houses and a villa abroad, she had an army of faceless servants that marched in step, she owned superb horseflesh, and meritorious motors and a private picture gallery. She owned parrots and white peacocks and scarabs dug out of Egypt, a bath tub of Carrara marble, and a pet poet.

The dark stain of her mouth, its wearied melancholy, was only to be coaxed by "things," but Adam knew how to make it smile. It had become a game with him and people said that never had a woman been so adored by a man. He made her smile automatically and at fixed intervals with a certain scientific interest and precision. But when his lungs became laden with the incense of her luxury or her parties boiled too high for him, or when her pet poet crawling out of a cushion made the mistake of reading him an ode to a purple iris, he was wont to pack his duds precipitately and leave. And very soon after there would be Hezekiah Smithers, redolent of the farm, meeting him at a little station called Pietyville with a mutilated buggy and a nag that looked like the original Rosinante. And when they reached the shore farm there would be Rosemary rollicking on the gate, with the pathetic gaiety and goodness, the adorable small breast and slim ankle of seventeen. The miracle of discovery was each time new to him—Rosemary made from a rib of his imagination, exceeding all his dreams for her.

She was a young creature of, yet apart from the family that had fostered her, sweet-natured, sound in principle, yet with a tutored mind that was beginning to outstrip their narrow prejudice, a sense of humor that leaned toward

whimsy. Adam came to her with the luggage of his theories in his hand and cached in his heart the secretive, arbitrary love of which she knew very little. And this was his double life.

If you find a hand in your pocket you must accord it hospitality, but there are ways and ways of doing such things. Was it chivalry or selfishness that caused him to treat the visiting hand as an object no less accidental than his handkerchief? Was he saving her *from himself for himself*, and if so, in just what tangible consummation did he believe? There was Mrs. Wicke, wiry in the forties, with her prehensile fingers locked about life and tightly gripped in the mane of his fortune which she rode like an Amazon. But Wicke was the queer fellow she had made him, the doctor of dreams, the middle-aged mooncalf. Socially uncouth, most people did not like him. But Rosemary showed him as much affection as he would let her. In every way she was bigger than he, born free and uninhibited. All her impulses were natural ones, her mischief robust, her instinct sound, her pride justified. Her mind was no gnarled orchard of bitter trees. All her thoughts sprang straight and symmetrical and when he cheated her, by some sixth sense she knew about it and withdrew her hand from his pocket in dudgeon.

Her wits told her that beyond the farm were places and people which it was her right to know and enjoy. Her intuition warned her of a program of suppression, a withholding quality in Adam's guardianship which hurt and perplexed her. At first she was troubled about her beauty and her bent toward enhancement, but gradually, as the innocent urge grew stronger within her, she fought him with judgment. She had begun to know about love too, though his wily thoughts ran ahead of hers in an effort to circumvent them.

So in their conversations they could never go far without encountering the wall of his reservations.

"Don't you think," she would appeal

prettily, "that Mother Smithers is a wee bit old-fashioned, Adam?"

She had called him by that name one day unexpectedly as a sign that she was become a woman and, sweetly, acutely flattered at the core, the man of forty-eight had needed a moment in which to solidify his defences.

"Mrs. Smithers?" He smiled at the question. The good farm wife in her narrow sphere was in truth a tartar. "In what way?"

"In the way that she never trusts me to be anywhere by myself, to know anyone that she hasn't first known herself."

"We want to keep you as you are, Rosemary," was his miserly explanation.

She turned upon him her searching eyes, for the moment sceptical of his benevolence. Adam's face was lean now with deep channels; it had ever been a sober face and during the last few years it had come to hold in solution the message of its disappointment. Even his love could not soften the scribblings of irony.

"How do you know," asked Rosemary, brown hands knotted together, "that I couldn't be something better than I am? Adam, dear, it isn't that I'm tired of the farm. I've always loved it—I always shall, but outside everything is different and I want a taste of the 'differentness.'"

He was stabbed by apprehension.

"Outside everything is twisted and bewildering. Here you're as cozy as a flower in a crock. . . ."

There was a pause. Then she said with difficulty,

"Amy Rogers, the girl at the next farm, was married last week. . . . Her mother went to Providence and bought her a lot of pretty clothes. . . . She let me try them on. But Mother Smithers has never bought me a pretty thing in my life. . . ."

She did not make the statement a direct accusation, but he felt the indictment.

For the first time since he had known her Adam saw the sunshine and moonshine of her happy little face lost in the

clouds of sadness. She found one of his hands and hers closed about it with a desperate apology, a wistfulness very poignant.

"Forgive me if it's wicked, but oh, Adam, I do so want to have pretty things and make people like me."

He laughed slackly in an attempt to allay his own fears. All fears was his love for her and all fists.

"Adam, can't I some time have pretty things?"

He pressed the cajoling hand she had slipped into his and held it against his cheek, but his eyes were absent, far from her and wilful as steel.

"No, my Rosemary Wren, never, if I can help it, never, never. . . ."

VI

ADAM's illness was unprecedented in his experience. His physique of a day laborer proclaimed, not without truth, an excellent constitution. But out of a bad exposure one night in the Virginia mountains, when, his whim having been to walk from one of his canning factories to the train, he had been lost in a blizzard, came pneumonia and for three solid weeks, delirium. He had developed a high fever on the train returning to New York and had barely had the presence of mind to wire for some one to meet him when he became seriously ill, when numbness shut down like a wall and he was enclosed inside it. Yet he wore an overcoat and hat and without assistance stepped from the train in the Pennsylvania depot, though he failed utterly to recognize the manservant his wife had sent to meet him. What the fellow saw was Adam Wicke preposterously flushed and feeble, his lips dark and fever-cracked, with a little blood stain continuously forming upon them.

Then followed the three weeks of bloody fighting, the chaos and jeopardy of his suffering, conducted always in the strange realm of his nether consciousness. But at length he emerged with odd passivity to find himself in the antiseptic presence of two trained

nurses. His wife was frequently at his bedside, too, her town season ruined, but by dint of the sympathy and attentions she received partially compensated. He was glad to think that Rosemary, little Rosemary, his tender-hearted protegee, had been spared the details of his illness. She would simply wonder why he had been so long absent and why he had neglected her in the matter of letters.

But great was his annoyance when once more he was able to return to his office, to discover that the staff, assuming carte blanche to manage his affairs during his period of disability, had twice sent one of its young men down to the shore property in Rhode Island. It was certainly the irony of fate that, having claimed no attention for itself all these years, it should choose this unpropitious time in which to do so. The reason was that a new shoreline trolley franchise had gone through and the local parties concerned were desirous of surveying Wicke's northern meadows with a view to making him a very good offer for the right of way.

An emissary was despatched to Rhode Island to convene with the directors of the new railway, said emissary being one Townsend, Tommy Townsend, a sandy-haired, surprised looking youth with a bouncing heart and no particular assets. Wicke learned that on the occasion of each visit to the property Tommy had passed the night at the farm as the guest of the Smithers, and calling him in he gave him a complete overhauling. Tommy said "Yes, sir," "No, sir," and popped his bright eyes at his employer in such a knowing way that the older man had the sensation of being spied upon in his secret thought processes, then backed carefully out of his presence like Bob Cratchitt from the presence of old Scrooge.

If Adam could have given vent to his irritability it would probably have sounded childish. He hated to admit even to himself how acute were his anxieties. . . . That his Paradise had been invaded was bad enough, but that

it had been invaded by one of Tommy's damnably smart perceptions was worse. Tommy knew a pretty girl a mile away, Tommy was full of harmless gallantries; he had a romantic, moving picture soul, a Brooks Brothers' exterior. Tommy was used to city girls, but any fool could see Rosemary's grace shining through her country gingham and homespuns. . . .

Wicke, the white and wilful convalescent, eluding all his keepers, hurried down into Rhode Island, fretting and fuming, to find if the jewel he had hasped about so carefully had been disturbed.

Rosemary met him all solicitude and tenderness, and at first the thankfulness of finding her so natural and charming was enough to dispel his fears. It was April at its balmiest, and they went down through the spongy fields to the beach, very slowly in deference to his weakness. And picking up the old and pleasant threads of their friendship, he gave his hungry eyes her shadowless face for comfort, and deferred the time of actual catechism.

But finally, having led up to the subject by a circuitous route and having crossed all the little crooked stiles, he spoke of Tommy Townsend. Comic how he felt about the boy, how a mere nobody like Tommy had been able to upset him. Just to think of him in the presence of Rosemary was disastrous to his nerves. He asked her if she had had any conversation with Tommy Townsend. He hoped that Mrs. Smithers had seen to it that she didn't. Rosemary blushed. It seemed that Mrs. Smithers had issued a mandate and that it had been disobeyed.

"I went to the beach alone," admitted Rosemary, "and he followed me. And we did talk. Oh, Adam, it was the first time anyone young and different had been here. Was it so very bad of me?"

"But the second time?" queried Wicke in a brittle voice.

Though the girl was visibly shaken she answered his look without subterfuge.

"The second time he came he said that it really was to see me. . . ."

Through his pain Adam heard the sea's "iron thunder"; he visualized exactly how it had been, the boy eager with his tribute, even sincere, and Rosemary so flattered, so responsively affectionate to anyone who would tender her the true hand of comradeship. He saw the girl, glorious in her first license, swept beyond and out of herself in the tide of young flattery.

"The rascal," moaned Adam wretchedly, "the young jackanapes. . . ."

"And before he went," she was concluding her tale with an immense simplicity, "he told me that he loved me. Think of it, Adam, oh, think of it, the second time he had seen me. . . ."

The thrilling timbre of her voice grew thin on the wind. Adam sat clutching his rock in a darkness more dreadful than he had known that faraway day when she had been to him just an orphan with three freckles on her nose.

"But you don't—you can't think you love him?" he gasped at last, cramped with anger and futility. He saw the years of his devotion, all that he had put into his vigil of outlaw hope and passion.

For answer she held up her wrist on which clinked two tiny silver bangles, cheap ornaments worth no more than a few dollars.

"Of course I do," she answered. "He gave me these. . . ."



Gray Ashes

By Henri Celestina Cooper

*THEY say love turns to ashes,
Gray ashes—cold and bleak.
But, sometimes, it is strange
How gray ashes
Keep a brilliant, scarlet streak.*



THE youngsters of today no longer believe in Santa Claus. The only ones who still believe in him are chorus girls.



IT is easy enough to keep a girl out of mischief. The hard thing is to keep her out of trouble.



LOVE is a recipe for staying young. Marriage a recipe for staying out.



De Viris

By Charles Cain

I

Prof. Storwick

IT was his great work on "The Passing of the Nordic" that first caught my attention. I wrote to him; he answered cordially, and for two years kept me informed of the progress of his researches, of his rendition of Beowulf, his feverish striving to recreate the spirit of those thunderous days of endless guzzling and glorious head-splitting.

When at last, visiting by chance the college town in which he lived, I rang the bell of his apartment, I was curiously excited at the prospect of meeting this modern Viking.

My first ring brought no answer; but at the second, the door across the hall opened and a vivacious blonde peeped out.

"Pardon me," she said, "but if you're looking for Professor Storwick, he's gone."

"Gone? . . ."

"Yes. And I'm afraid, unless you're a *very* dear friend of his, you won't find him. He didn't leave any address, you see."

My manner must have convinced her that I did not see, for—

"Surely," she exclaimed, "you have heard! Is it possible? Well, if I don't tell it somebody else will; it's all over town. You see it was his son—a fine young man—he got in trouble, as young men will—wine and women, you know—and they say when the police came he struck them with bottles. And the poor dear professor, of course, simply *couldn't bear* the disgrace."

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II

Snocky O'Neill

His physique is not impressive; he is of medium height, thin, rather pale; and his shoulders sag. But his manner! In the hang of his cigarette, his mastery of Spearmint, his nonchalant wielding of the cue, the negligent artistry of his spitting, the toss of his head, the deft hitch of his trousers, the angle of his arm on the Bevo-bar, and the jagged fragments of his side-flung snarls, I catch glimpses of a soul that has ripped line and threaded backfield on many an imaginary gridiron, accepted calmly the gifts and treacheries of poker table and of ticker, and battered welters, middle-weights and heavies into bleeding pulp; the heroic soul of a grappler, a bruiser, a King of Swat.

III

Joe Baggle

He is blear-eyed and white, loose-jawed and rheumy, and he shuffles about the fourth-class Post Office in his daughter's footsteps, or peers over his glasses at people who come for stamps. But he is a man; for sixty-nine years he has been openly Democratic in a high-tariff, anti-secession community, and he talks proudly of hard-hittin', straight-shootin' Old Hickory.

"In his day," I observed once to a group of his townsmen, "Joe must have been the perfect type of the early American frontiersman—brawny, fearless, energetic."

"Yeah," growled an ancient Abolitionist. "They say he was right peert when he was a youngster; many a time

I've hearn tell how he acted up once back in the eighties. It was election night and nobody knew how 'twas goin' to turn out. Old Joe (he was thirty-some years old then) he set up late to get the returns, but his daughter Jenny she went to bed. They had a big bell in the house; always been there. Well, about midnight the news come—Cleveland was elected.

"Old Joe, he ups and uncrosses his knees and slaps him a whack on the leg and lets out a whoop. 'Hoor-reee!' he hollers. 'Jenny! Oh Jenny! We won! We won! Cleveland whopped 'em! Git up, Jenny, and ring the bell!'"

IV

Gill Farquhar Henderson

HE is a gray-faced pudgy man with hard sly little eyes and a thin-lipped mouth that wriggles, when he talks, like the twitching scar of an old putty-knife stab. The shortness of his legs does not impair his dignity: he walks with a leisurely measured step that is almost stately, and others, unconsciously, adopt his pace. I believe he cultivates what Jack London calls inevitability. He never raises his voice, and does not allow conversation, however important, to interfere with the deliberate movement of his cigar to and from his mouth. His thin, colorless lips, in repose, are callous and complacent.

I met him at the office of a small newspaper. He stood erect, puffing placidly at a cigar, while a Jew he had brought in negotiated, sullenly and suspiciously, with the affable squeaky-voiced editor. On the desk was a rough layout for a full page ad. The Jew was fumbling with his cheque book.

"I'll give you that," squeaked the editor, wavering between casualness and an air of confidential concession, "for a hundred dollars."

The Jew looked sharply at him, then helplessly at Henderson. Henderson smoked aloofly. The Jew wrote a cheque.

When the two callers had gone the editor gave me a Celtic smile. "Gotta

hand it to that fellah. Old Greenberg never bought an inch of space before."

I sauntered out and followed the imperturbable Henderson, who seemed to have shed his reluctant client without effort. After a brief exchange of words, which left me with a cigar and a certain sense of privilege, we wandered toward the hotel together, boasting reticently, as strangers do in a dull midwestern town.

While I watched his thin lips play with the struggling cigar, as if they were merely prolonging its sufferings because at the moment they did not care to swallow it, he favored me with bits of business comment. He was traveling, independently, putting on sales for retailers "to move their stock." He smiled wisely.

"Believe me," he said with his peculiarly intense mutter, lacking resonance but somehow forceful, "I *move* it: Plenty of publicity. Forty per cent of the gross. Little retailer falls all over my neck; thinks he's learned the secret of salesmanship. When I'm gone he finds he's saturated three or four counties at cut prices, and won't make a sale in some lines for six months. And his competitors are sore." He chuckled. "Say, that editor's no boob. Hundred dollars, eh? Fifty'd be more like it. . . . Well, let him get away with it if he can. I'm no Jew's wet nurse. Knock 'em on 'eir ear. That's my motto. They'll respeckcha alla more for it."

I dined with him, by his invitation, at the standardized hotel. It was evident that he had known the best and worst of hotels; he could summon a waiter, at long range, with a slight turn of his gimlet eye and his small mouth, and shrivel him with softly uttered phrases of contempt.

"Service! A hell of a lot they care about service. They're not in business for their health. . . . Well, let 'em get by with it if they can. But not with me. Knock 'em on their ear, son; and make 'em like it."

He was well-informed. He knew all races. The Germans were a smart business people, but lacked initiative. The

Russians were pigs. The French were the lowest of the white races. What had they done? What were they good for? I murmured something about surgery, war, philosophy, exploration, art; but my enthusiasm congealed instantly in the chill gaze of his faintly curious pig eyes.

"Yeah," he conceded indifferently. "Art. . . . But say," he continued with more interest, "look at their books. I've read 'em. De Maupassant, Balzac, all those guys. They're rotten. Why, they're the filthiest-minded people on earth."

We chatted a while after dinner. Then he left me. "See y'again. Like to stay, but I'm dated. Few minutes late. . . . That's the system; keep 'em waitin' on you. If they get hard-boiled, knock 'em on 'eir ear. They like y'alla more for it." He rose, and grinned slyly. "Well, so long. There's a husband out of town tonight."

Erect and unhurried, he moved off to his assignation.

V

The Unknown

I DO not know him, but I fear I shall:

"Somewhere in this broad land there is a red-blooded go-getter, a two-fisted he-man with credit agency experience . . ."

VI

Eli Hubber

ONCE, in his youth, he heeded the sly whisper of Satan, but the Lord gave him courage to face the doctor, and he has been an upright God-fearing Christian ever since.

VII

J. Cutler Batterson

His gleaming glasses hold my eye. He barks out his sentences and bites

his words. His white teeth flash, and his jaws come together with a snap.

"What this country needs today," he asserts, as he smites the desk, "is a race cast in the mold of Theodore Roosevelt."

VIII

William Nettlesby, Jr.

WE met again, a short time ago, in a dining-car. He is a short young man, but by throwing his head back he can meet the gaze of the tallest without raising his eyelids. I was his guest, and he insisted that I be treated as such.

"The American people," he said with impressive severity, "demand Service."

I recalled the words he used in some past discussion (to his hostess, concerning Negroes? or to his brother officers, concerning enlisted men?):

"I know how ya feel about it; I used to feel that way myself. Butcha *can't* be decent with that class of people. Ya gotta keep 'em in their place, or they'll walk on you. Ya *gotta* be hard-boiled with 'em. Ya gotta sit on 'em. Ya gotta *make* 'em respeckcha."

IX

Edwin, Dear

I WAS never a friend of his, but sometimes on Sunday mornings I used to see his mother tow him past our window to Sunday school. So, when I met that large competent lady on my recent visit to the home town, I thought it courteous to speak of him. Her eyes, as she looked down upon my soul, expressed pity, rather than the disdain I had expected, and she replied with tremulous sweetness:

"Why, yes, he did; how did you ever guess it? And do you know, I had always *hoped*, in my heart of hearts, that Edwin dear would someday be called to the ministry."



Veneer

By Mabel McElliott

I

WHEN Hermione was little, they lived in a flat, because at that time "apartments" were practically unknown in Chicago. It was really quite chic to live in a flat. Much more so than in the sort of house—tiny, peaked, two story and garret—in which Hermione's mother had been brought up. The flat was considered an especially nice one, anyhow. It had shining, dark oak woodwork, and grilles between the front and back parlors, and between the dining-room and kitchen (which immediately followed these two rooms), a butler's pantry.

Hermione could remember thrilling to the butler's pantry. That they should have one, even though no butler presided therein, seemed to her inexpressibly elegant.

The bedrooms wandered off at intervals from the various living-rooms. There were three, and they were large and bright, and honestly full of fresh air. When you think of the apartments nowadays, Hermione's early flat was really quite a gem.

They furnished it with care, avoiding some of the older heavier pieces which had come to them from Mr. Mannering's mother, and buying a few new ones: having two of the fat old chairs, and a "settee" done over in modest upholstery. They had a green shaded lamp in the back parlor, and a rug on the table which held the lamp. That was, for those days, a radical gesture. Everyone else draped her golden oak table with a crash scarf embroidered at either end with a flower motif, or a green leather mat cut in outlandish design—from the Garden of the Gods,

or some place—but Mrs. Mannering's fancy ran to a Turkish rug—no less!

That was the way Mrs. Rudie Debbs expressed it, anyway. A rug, no less! She had her own opinion of such tomfoolery, but when she saw it, on the occasion of Mrs. Mannering's birthday, she just shut her lips tightly and made no comment. That was Mrs. Debbs' way. Afterward she was likely to make it the subject matter for more than one session of afternoon gossip, but Mrs. Mannering herself should not have the satisfaction of knowing that she—Erna Debbs—was impressed.

Mrs. Mannering always had a birthday party, with frills. That was another thing. Where Erna Debbs and Mrs. Tom Richmond and Ella Bannerman and the others would celebrate *their* natal days with modest layouts of ice cream and cake, Mrs. Mannering would bid them all, in delicately written notes, on lavender paper, to come to luncheon at one o'clock. Then they would have chicken salad, and little, hot, delicious rolls, and olives, and ineffably good coffee, and ices from Fleet's, and a birthday cake from Miss Dobell who charged "two prices" for everything.

There would be a maid, too, in black, with an apron—and unbelievable mark of swank—a cap! Of course, Erna and Mrs. Richmond and the rest of them knew perfectly well that it was the Mannering's washwoman's girl, Minna, but it put their backs up just the same.

Always the battle was on, underneath the passage of polite wishes and chatter and inquiry. Mrs. Mannering would have a new dress, perhaps of gray poplin, with a vestee of real Irish, and a train which swept magnificently. The

others would observe, comment with grudging admiration, go home in little animated knots, gabbling about it. Erna Debbs was more politic than the others. She had little to say, and made that little vague. Mrs. Richmond and Ella Bannerman, both frugal, tidy, simple souls, would gasp and exclaim, and wonder how Mr. Mannering stood it. Such extravagance! So foolish! And that new library table . . . solid mahogany!

If they had only known, it was not solid mahogany. Poor Fred Mannering's slim purse did not, indeed, stretch so far as that. It was elastic, but had its limit. Mrs. Mannering's air and the new gray dress, no doubt, gave the impression. Then, too, when veneer is new, you have to be "pretty good" to detect it.

Mrs. Mannering and Hermione used to gloat over these parties, once they were over. They were not obvious, however, even when alone.

Hermione would say: "The cake was very nice, mama. I think Mrs. Richmond enjoyed it."

And Mrs. Mannering would smile, ever so faintly, yet like one who has difficulty in restraining the delighted grin of a gamine.

"Did you hear her ask me for the recipe?" she would inquire, with a complacent note. "Of course she knew it came from Dobell's, but you know how she is . . . wanted to pretend I had been slaving away in the kitchen."

Slaving away in the kitchen was one of the things Mrs. Mannering did not like to do. To her friends she always pretended that Minna, a maid in mufti, did all the odd jobs. It was not strictly true, but since she had built around herself this fable of a lily-handed lady she refused to scrap it. It pleased her mightily to get up early, do her housework with a swift and capable hand, change into crisp white linen, and be out on her back porch with a magazine while most of her neighbors were shaking rugs and wrestling with breakfast dishes. She had the enviable faculty of looking cool and casual in the morning.

If by any chance Ella Bannerman ran across the street to borrow a cup of sugar, or an egg (yes, they did that in Chicago, in the late nineties) and Mrs. Mannering happened to be engaged in some homely task—blackening the stove, say—Hermione would supply deft camouflage. At the age of ten she was accomplished in the art of polite deception. She would answer the bell, bring Ella into "the library," ask her to sit down while she routed out the desired article . . . and explain that mama was lying down with a headache. Mrs. Mannering, embattled behind the door of her clothes-closet, blue gingham slightly smudged, still clutching the dingy stove rag, would sigh with relief once Ella and her egg were safely on their way.

She always felt vaguely that the fates had played her an ugly trick, saddling her with the heavy tasks of a household. And she used to wonder, idly, what sort of life would have been hers if she had married Will Dickmeyer instead of Fred Mannering . . . Will, with his wholesale feed and coal business, making money hand over fist, as the saying went. No blackening of stoves for her then!

Not that Will had ever proposed, actually. Fred Mannering, with his long, poetic face, and rather shambling walk, had been the only one sufficiently attracted to her aloof prettiness to pay her that honor. Yet, in common with most women, Mrs. Mannering felt she might have married any one of the men who attended the social gatherings of her youth. Discontentedly working away in her own incredibly clean kitchen, she sighed for glories ephemeral and far away. . . .

But all of this was when Hermione was very small.

II

WHEN Hermione grew up—when she was fifteen, in fact—her mother began to map out a systematic campaign for her. Her life was to be one of smooth success and easy sailing; of beauty, not drudgery. If she did not formulate her

thoughts in just such words, she worked to that end, swiftly and subtly.

Hermione was to go off to boarding-school—not to the public high school of the neighborhood. She was not to learn the slang of the moment, and stand about in giggling groups, waiting for some local swain to walk home with her—later marry the same unromantic youth, grown to manhood and a thirty-five dollar a week job. No, her destiny was to be brighter than that. . . .

Her mother combed the advertising sections of magazines, seeking out the best—and cheapest—school. She would have liked to send her "East," but that, of course, was obviously out of the question.

At last she selected one in Indiana—it sounded like a romantic location, and held out horseback riding as one of the allurements. Hermione went.

School was not for her an intellectual adventure. It was a strange mixture, in her mind, of new dresses, and pocket money, and a cheque over which her father frowned and her mother scolded. Of pretended elegance, and romancing about her former environment, and study hours that came and went dryly.

At the end of two years she was pronounced "finished." The establishment did not pretend to be a finishing school, actually. That was Mrs. Mannering's own fine touch. But Hermione had met some "nice girls" who lived on the Drive, and in Oak Park. Her ways were henceforth divided sharply from the ways of the Richmond girls and Elsie Debbs. Herb Bannerman hardly dared to speak to her on the street now, she was so grand.

For Hermione was really a beauty. In the nature of things, with her mother's plans for her, she should have been ugly as the popular idea of sin—with pale, stringy locks and a vapid gaze. Instead she was beautifully modeled, with the sort of curling, gold brown hair you used to see on expensive French dolls; great, melting eyes of battleship gray, a blooming cheek and a luscious glance. She was her mother

exaggerated, all colors stressed, with a dash of Fred's charm thrown in.

Her mother did her best by her in the way of clothes. It was not easy, always, "to drag the money out of papa." Papa, getting middle aged, and looking faintly weary, objected to the never-ending process. His own family had had the habit of thrift. He was of a mind to put by "a little something" week by week. His wife's demands for their daughter precluded much chance of this.

Long, long ago any pretence of love between the two parents of Hermione had fluttered and died. Fred, stooping in a fashion which in his youth had been considered poetic, but which now gave the impression of immense fatigue, found himself an extra spoke, a third party, a necessary evil. Hermione and her mother would chatter animatedly for hours about such uninteresting things as seams and tucks and shirring, while he sat silent. He had, ages past, given up any sort of conversation with his wife. She was frankly uninterested in his movements, except the one by which he conveyed to her his pay envelope.

Sometimes she would throw him a thrifty remark, as "Harriet's coming to dinner Sunday." And he would look up from his paper to mutter some vague comment. Usually he did not really hear her, just as she did not see him, really.

Summers, the two women went off together.

"Papa can't get his vacation now." Hermione used to explain, when she was small, to the curious children whose families trotted off in shoals, bundle and satchel laden, to some Michigan "summer resort."

And in September, "papa," oddly content, dawdled away his two precious weeks of freedom all by himself.

After the finishing school term, Hermione and her mother felt she was "ready for the swim." At least, that was how Mrs. Mannering phrased it to her daughter in the privacy of the sun-parlor. For by this time they had moved to a real apartment, with oriental

rugs and artcraft vases. There was, too, a davenport, deep and plushy and wine colored. The table which had aroused the visiting ladies' comment so long before remained, proud and silent, in a corner. . . .

In public, however, Mrs. Mannering was more choice with her language. She said, with that especially languid air which most irritated her neighbors, that Hermione was going about in society a great deal. Mrs. Bannerman listened, with glacial green eyes, and Mrs. Richmond was known to sniff directly the other lady had quitted the room.

What she meant was that Hermione, having assiduously cultivated her Drive and Park acquaintances of school, having joined their fudge-eating sororities, was going about to dances given by the same . . . dances which were glibly titled "formals" by her new set.

"Hermione's going to a formal," her mother would say, rolling the word on her tongue. And poor Ella Bannerman, who still did her own washing, and made last season's hat do for three seasons to come, wondered what on earth she meant.

"They wear dress suits, ma!" Herb explained, patiently, when she asked him, scorn in her voice, about it.

Herb Bannerman by this time was doing very well, for a young fellow. That was the way he described it, to himself. He had perfected some kind of electrical contrivance for his "firm," had sold the thing at a sound price, with royalties in prospect. Now "the firm" was sending him to New York to sell the thing, and see to store displays.

Mrs. Mannering listened inattentively to his mother's garbled account of the miracle, waiting only for a chance to plunge in with details of Hermione's pale green taffeta. This "formal" was at the Congress, she said, riding down poor Herb's little triumph with a ruthless conversational steed. Hermione was going with a young man from the Drive . . . his people belonged to the Saddle and Cycle, and had a Packard. Her thin lips curved grimly when she said "Packard." If it had been a lesser

car, she might not have mentioned it.

Herb heard it all again at the table that night. He was leaving for New York at nine, but he was quite willing to linger for news of Hermione Mannering. She had been a sort of fairy princess to his mind, long ago. Once, in his awkward years, he had been daring enough to invite her to a dance—a public high school dance. She had bridled and fidgeted, and had said she would ask mama. In the end, she had embarrassedly informed him that mama didn't like her to go to dances—like that—without a chaperon, and she wasn't feeling well enough to take that office on herself. The "like that" had cut Herb as with a knife. He had mumbled something inarticulate, had made a hasty exit, suffering agonies.

He never tried again. He had been given to hazy romancing about Hermione, watching the light in the parlor window, walking up and down, on cold nights, listening to her play trilly things on the piano, sending her surreptitious valentines. After that he had been hurt and rather angry . . . had thought, with hot pride that he'd show her.

Now, though his heart had forgotten, his brain had not. He always managed to lend an ear to his mother's indignant accounts of the Mannerings' "goings-on." Once, during the past year, he had passed Hermione in the Loop, as she swung along on a feverish shopping tour.

He had bowed gravely, with just a trace of the old diffidence, at her nod. Gosh, she certainly was pretty, he had thought. But that had been all. Not a flicker. Work, and the new-absorbing contact with people had shaken greatly his awe of her.

III

"THE young man from the Drive" came for Hermione that evening, talked glibly to Mrs. Mannering as she sat in the wine colored living-room, waiting for the vision to appear. Hermione's mother was none of your fireside weather prophets, twiddling nervous

thumbs as her daughter's swain boredly stifled yawns. She employed the time to good advantage, "drew him out," was unobtrusively deft about "placing" him. What his father was . . . where he lived . . . if she had not possessed herself of this information long before . . . what his ambitions were.

She noticed intonations and the cut of coats. Manners. A queen, observing a new courtier, could not have been more keen and critical.

This youth—his name was Grimshaw—passed all the tests. Hermione could see that, when she came, fluttering and sea green, through the curtains. Pirouetting for her cloak, she caught the gleam of triumph in her mother's glance. It said, plainer than words, "Go to it. I approve." Mrs. Mannering might never have said "Go to it" audibly, but her eyes did not disdain the admonition.

She was tingling with suppressed excitement when she went back to the kitchen, where Fred was reading the paper. He always read his paper in the kitchen, and knocked his pipe against her immaculate sink. It was one of the things she was used to, by this time.

"He's crazy about her . . . crazy about her," she remarked, preparing to put out the milk bottle. When Hermione went to a "formal" the rigid schedule of that spotless kitchen was set slightly askew. Hence the milk bottle.

"Who's crazy about who?" asked Fred, coming out of depths. He was reading about a murder on Grand Boulevard, and it was good.

"That young man, Dan Grimshaw," his wife told him, somewhat impatiently.

"Oh, him!" Fred refilled his pipe, and turned to the Evening Story.

"It's time somebody like that came along," Mrs. Mannering went on.

Usually she was taciturn with her husband. Tonight the effect of the Packard, and the gorgeous youth in his impressive clothes, were a bit too much for her. She grew as loquacious as a prohibitionist who has dipped unwisely in home-brew.

"Somebody like that," she bubbled,

"with brains and money and good looks."

She grew suddenly arch.

"You'll have to give her a grand wedding, papa," she cried.

Fred Mannering looked up obliquely from the Evening Story. It was a country romance, lush with woodland violets and blue eyes and young, thwarted hearts. He scarcely heard her.

"Wedding? Whose wedding?" he inquired.

"It's reasonable to suppose Hermione will marry some time, soon, I suppose," she returned, crossly. Fred never *did* follow you . . . no use talking to him. . . .

After she had gone back to her observation post at the front window, her husband put down his paper. Wedding! So that was it, was it? "Grand wedding!" If they found out that he had that little something salted away in the Illinois National, they would be sure to cajole it out of him for it.

A big expense, but a big expense off his hands, too. Not that he wanted to get rid of little Hermione (he always called her that, to himself, ignoring the fact that she was a baby Juno), but lately her mother had been driving him wild (so he put it) with demands. He had thought, with that school business over, he would have a little let-up. But no. If it wasn't money for this, it was money for that. And he was nowhere at the end of the month.

A man of his age got sick of the grind, too. He had salted away, with blood and tears, that bit at the bank. A man didn't want to end his days in a flat, especially one he couldn't afford. There was a little house out in Maywood, with a garden. He could have chickens, and smoke his pipe out on the porch, with his feet up. Not good enough for Hermione, of course, but if she did get married, why then, Gertie would have to come.

He set his jaw firmly, as he had a trick of doing when his women folk were not in sight. He would have long arguments, conducted entirely by himself, wherein he told Gertie just what

was what, and made sarcastic comments to his daughter, beginning: "Your mother thinks I'm made of money. . . ." But they went no further than that. His wife's cold angers, and worse than that, her prolonged silences, were enough to still the words on his lips. He had a childlike hatred of family scenes and "fussing."

Now he saw his little fund go slipping. . . .

IV

CURIOUSLY enough—for things so seldom happen as planned—Hermione did marry Dan Grimshaw. The wooing was conducted according to the good old tenets. Mrs. Mannering spread news of the young man's deathless devotion. Flowers and candy kept arriving, the neighbors themselves could see that. Passionate volumes of poetry adorned Hermione's dressing-table, and a splashily signed photograph of her "hero," as she called him. His people gave a dinner at "The Beach," and Mrs. Mannering had her purple crepe de chine made over. "Papa" simply would not give her another cent, she told Hermione, tight-lipped, yet surveying with satisfaction the trousseau things laid out on the bed.

Hermione's wedding dress was of real lace, and it was made by one of the most expensive shops in town. Her going-away suit was of brown duvetyn, in the first season of that fabric's vogue. She had gloves and shoes to match every costume, and her hope chest was packed to overflowing with towels and hem-stitched sheets, "shower" gifts of silk underwear and stockings and negligees. "The girls" were eternally arranging showers for her . . . excuses for gossip, and chicken salad, and recitations of their personal triumphs. . . .

Through it all, Hermione moved large and serene. It was all right. She was going to be "the real thing" at last. All this hard work, and cajoling of papa, in order to be decently dressed . . . this pretending to the girls about having a maid, and planning trips abroad, and thinking of buying a car . . . that was all over.

"Mrs. Daniel Waverly Grimshaw" . . . she saw her photograph, vastly enlarged, in the society section of the Sunday paper. Wedding presents, laid out on the table which had worn the famous Turkish rug so long ago. . . . It was beginning to peel now . . . one of the legs. She would buy mama a new one as soon as she was married. One of those gate-leg affairs. They turned the tell-tale piece to the wall, the warped wood out of sight.

Fred had not let on about his little secret fund in the bank. Gertie had said: "Well, mortgage your life insurance, then," and he had said all right, he would, it didn't make any difference to him. It was *her* funeral. It was his, in point of fact, but his wife was too absorbed to deal her usual rapier of sarcasm.

Let them be fools, and pay out all that money to a hotel, for red carpets and things, he told himself, angrily. When it was all over, he would spring the Maywood house on Gertie. Their lease on the apartment was up in May. He would move out. She might come or stay, as she liked. . . .

Mrs. Bannerman and Mrs. Rudie Debbs and Mrs. Richmond received invitations to the church, only. Mrs. Mannering debated for a long time, weighing the relative importances of having her ancient critics view her final triumph . . . the hotel dinner and dance . . . and of letting the Grimshaws know they had such "dubby" friends. In the end, she decided not to spoil the good impression Hermione had undoubtedly made upon her fiancé's people. She did not apologize or stammer when she met the others, and Mrs. Bannerman was bitter for weeks because Herb had insisted on sending such an expensive wedding present, and all for nothing!

Fred Mannering waited for a whole week after the wedding before "springing" his project. During that time his wife had chatted with him more than usual . . . she was really very lonely without Hermione . . . and had showed him each evening the postals from the travelers, en route to the Rockies. . . .

On Saturday he told her, showed her the deed to the little house.

"Tell old Deke we won't want the flat after May first," he said gruffly.

Mrs. Mannering at first had no words. She went white, then a little blue about the lips. She cleared away the supper things. Then the storm broke.

If he thought he was going to drag her out to that awful hole, he was mistaken. After all these years, scrimping and saving, and now his daughter married to somebody, he was going to cheat her out of everything. . . . Her lovely furniture—and chickens.

After a while her wrath spent itself. Fred interjected a word here and there, a patient, stubborn word. That was all right . . . he was tired . . . he was going to do what he liked. If Hermione and Dan were too fine to come out to see them, why, then, they could stay away, for all he cared. . . .

"Then I'll not go," flared his wife. "Try it yourself. Hermione'll see I shan't have to go out to that hole."

She slammed off to bed.

In the morning they were both wakened early by the strident ringing of the doorbell. Fred, in his shabby gray flannel dressing gown, brought her the telegram. It was from Hermione, and it announced they were arriving at three that afternoon.

Fear clutched at her mother's heart. Something was wrong, something. They had planned to stay away four weeks. Something was wrong. . . .

In the afternoon Hermione came. Not in the Packard, not even in a taxi, but on foot. Her mother was watching.

She was slightly hysterical when she opened the door.

"Where's Dan?" she cried shrilly, peering at her daughter. "What'll the neighbors say, you coming back all alone? You passed Mrs. Richmond down the street, too. . . ."

"Yes, I passed her. For Heaven's sake, Mama! . . ." Hermione shrugged

with impatience. "It's nothing. Dan had to stop in at the office."

"What's the matter?" shrilled Mrs. Mannering staccato.

Hermione's bloom seemed to take on a film of sullenness.

"Don't ask *me!*" she said, pettishly. "Something at the office. Dan's father wired him to come back. Something about losing the territory he used to sell. . . ."

This was worse than Greek to Mrs. Mannering. She grasped at concrete things.

"Why didn't they send the car for you?" she cried. "You walking up from the elevated, and that thing lying idle. . . ."

"Oh, Mama, it isn't!" Hermione explained, suddenly patient. "They had to sell it this week. Just kept it for the wedding, I guess. Dan told me, on the way home. . . ."

"We may have to come to stay with you for a while," she said, looking around the room. "If things are to be tight, Dan says, we can't take that apartment. Can you put us up?"

But Gertrude Mannering had fainted, was lying in a little, limp heap, her head against the scraped leg of the living-room table.

V

"It's the real thing, ain't it?" admired the plump sales manager of the big department, where Herb Bannerman's contrivance was on display.

"Lots better than that article the Mayo people used to get out," admitted its creator, falling back a pace to get the view.

"Fellow name o' Grimshaw used to sell Mayo stuff," said the executive, mopping a heated brow. "Slick feller. Know him? Lives out your way, I think."

"Not now," said Herb Bannerman, putting the pale green cheque carefully in his new wallet. "He's with his wife's people, out in Maywood."



Notes of a Wanderer

By John Torcross

I

LONDON

I ADMIRE the shrimp salad at Scott's in the Haymarket, the foulard neckwear of Hilditch and Key in Jermyn Street, the ante-room to the Piccadilly Grill at tea time, the scent of Covent Garden at dawn, the lamps of Belgrave Square on a foggy evening and the flower girls in the Strand. I can't abide the boiled potatoes and damson tarts that invariably appear on the luncheon menus, the bathrooms in Brown's Hotel, the American tourists who patronize the "Cheshire Cheese," and the revue at the Empire.

I have never entered the Café Royal without encountering some highly diverting episode. I do not know the curator of the Mummy Room in the British Museum. Once, while at Madame Tussaud's I feigned a wax work and winked evilly at a sweet old lady who happened by. The poor creature, I learned later, died of apoplexy two days afterward.

I consider Hatchard's Bar an establishment of A No. 1 character and the *petits fours* at the Café de l'Europe atrocious. I am against the cocktails at the Savoy.

The patience of the number of Londoners who witness (and apparently approve) the identical vaudeville turns for fifteen consecutive years staggers me not a little. I have never held a clandestine rendezvous beneath the statue of Achilles in Hyde Park nor eaten "Toad in the Hole."

II

PARIS

I CONSIDER the view from the summit of the Arc de Triomphe on a June evening and Foyot's *sole Americaine* the choicest things in Paris. I am, however, singularly ensnared by the bun shops in the Rue Saint Honoré, the Bois de Boulogne in September, and the auburn-haired usheress at the Comédie Française. I have visited every bookstall along both banks of the Seine for many years and have, as yet, been unable to discover a single volume that I could wade through. I am always amused by Frenchmen's underwear.

I would rather dine at the Boeuf à la Mode in the Rue Valois than at the Ritz and I would rather dine with little hazel-eyed Céleste in the Avenue Montparnasse than at the Boeuf à la Mode. I have never purchased an obscene postcard in the Rue du Rivoli.

Such frivolity factories as "Le Grand Teddy" in the Rue Caumartin, designed for the aristocracy of Newark, N. J., affect me in much the same manner as a rainy morning in the country. I have yet to behold an American in Paris who is not, somehow or other, out of the picture. The Coupes Saint Jacques at the Café Anglais, the Palais Royal farces and the Morgue intrigue me strangely.

With all its gaiety, its impudence, its mockery, there is something curiously tearful about Paris. I think it is the Cook's tourists, the Paris *Herald*, the South Americans and the Spanish absinthe.

III

MADRID

NEXT to the Cervceria Inglesa in the Calle Echegaray, and Lolita, the little rose vendor at the entrance to the Plaza de'Toros, I am fetched by the *aros con almejas* at the Hotel de Paris. Upon witnessing such terpichorean efforts as *la Hota*, *la Sevillaña* and *la Malagueña* I am wholly unaroused. Nor do I applaud the obscenities perpetrated under the guise of farce at the Teatro de la Zeruela.

The mauve silk handkerchiefs in the little shop in the Calle Alcala and the Goyas in the Collecion Traumann thrill me to the core. I have never ridden on the Tramvia del Este de Madrid but have always preferred a *fatingo* in company with a *jovencita* not over nineteen.

I have dropped as much as two thousand pesos at El Juego de Pilota in one afternoon but have never played in the evening. During my entire stay at Madrid I never once visited the Home for English and German governesses in the Calle Bravo Murillo.

The drollest anecdote I ever heard in my life was told me by a Barcelonan counterfeiter, late one night, in the Café de Viena subsequent to my conquest of seventeen *mazagrans con cognac*. I am not at liberty to recount it.

At twilight I am strangely touched while strolling along the Paseo de Fernán Núñez and on no few occasions have remained up the entire night in order to visit the markets in the Plaza de la Cebada. I am wholly unable to manipulate a pair of castanettes or to drink more than a quart of Amontillado at one sitting.

IV

TANGIERS

DURING my entire stay in Tangiers I learned not a single word of the Arabic language. My most vivid impression of the city embraces the eve-

ning when, returning to the Hotel Continental, I was set upon near the Djami' ael-Kebîr and thoroughly beaten up by three black ruffians who, I learned years later, were waggish friends of mine in disguise. While the wild-eyed maidens from the nearby Berber villages left me strangely frigid, the fig vendors in the Sûkh ed-Dakhl got me.

I can't remember contributing so much as a sou to a single mendicant stationed at the Bâb el-Fâs. I consider the hasheesh and Turkish coffee in the Socco de Barra both of excellent quality.

The snake charmers in the Sok, the mule drivers at the Bab el-Marsâ, and the fortune tellers in the Square of the Blacksmiths enthralled me far more than the pig-sticking or the colored photographs of Raisuli the bandit. I not even so much as tossed a kiss to any of the veiled maidens of the town.

V

NEW YORK

I HAVE never inspected the interior of Grant's Tomb nor have I ever journeyed the entire distance in the subway from City Hall to Van Cortlandt Park. I have invariably avoided the Aquarium, upper West Side chop-suey restaurants, the Polo Grounds, lower Broadway, East Fourteenth Street moving-pictures and the ferries to New Jersey. I prefer the back room at Gilhooly's to any supper restaurant and Central Park at dusk in the spring to any summer resort in America. Greenwich Village and its immediate environs fail to fill me with the slightest thrill.

Since 1917, New York night life appears to me little more than a sham and the so-called cabarets mere rendezvous for the out-of-towner. That sparkle of glamor, that note of revelry, once so typical of the metropolis, surely no longer exists in resorts of a public character. On the other hand, the walk-up kitchenette apartment has come into its own. Though gaiety no longer stalks

the streets, a strain of merry-making may not infrequently be detected through a shuttered window.

I am especially delighted by the *bortschok en tasse* at the Colony Restaurant, the divan seats at the Capitol Theatre, the nineteenth century air of Murray Hill, the extra lamb chops at Moore's in Forty-sixth Street, the ash trays at the Winter Garden, the

hat-check girls at the Café des Beaux Arts, the broccoli at Del Pezzo's, the view from the roof of the Century Theatre on a July night, the Hungarian music in West Forty-ninth Street, and the gardenias in the little flower shop in East Thirty-third Street.

I have never visited the Tombs nor known a girl who lived in the Martha Washington Hotel.



Bluebirds

By Georgie Carneal

ALWAYS before when bluebirds fluttered
On the black twigs high in low yellow skies
I knew a clinging love for Winter.
I knew a fear of the sweet woodland cries.

Gray snows that dotted reddish sandbanks,
White ice that clung to the edge of the sea,
Fiercely I clutched worn Winter's fingers,—
Winter as bare and as empty as me!

Now when blue feathers move in blackness,
When crispy chirps fall out chiseled and clear,
My heart is new, and glad for Beauty,
Glad, but apart from its terror last year.

Since Love has waited on my doorstep,
Wanting, my mind has gone numbly to home;
But that was Winter, and now: the Bluebird!
I want to be frightened again, and alone.



MEN'S names appear in histories. Women's in biographies.



CONFIDENTIAL—Anything worth while repeating.



The Outsider

By Thyra Samter Winslow

I

“WHEN I get married—,” Flora Gordon had said when she was ten years old. She and her sister, Grace, two years younger, and the Morrison girls, Julia and Hazel, who lived across the street, were playing with dolls on the side porch.

The side porch of the Gordon home was a nice place to play. The house was old, even when Flora was ten, a house of the scroll-work period, with a cupola in front and meaningless porches, but it was in Elm Street, then Logenberg’s best residence street. All the houses in Elm Street were like that, solid and yet with unnecessary ornament, like icing on bread. There were smooth lawns in front, protected by iron fences and on each lawn were unskillfully placed flowering bushes, round flower beds, bordered with shells or white-washed bits of stone, a red swing, and back of each house was a row of out-houses—a stable for the horse and surrey, with a room above it for the colored man-of-all-work; a chicken house; a shed for wood and coal; a shed for gardening tools.

The question of marriage had been brought on by possible doll behavior—what a child ought or ought not be allowed to do.

“How do you know you’ll ever marry?” asked Julia Morrison, who was only a year older but was very precocious.

“Why—I—I guess I will. Girls marry when they grow up . . . Aunt Hetty and my Mamma . . .”

“No, they don’t always,” said Julia. “My Aunt Fanny isn’t married and

there’s old Miss Garner—and—and all the school teachers.”

Flora thought about it after she was in bed that night. She had learned enough things—things you aren’t supposed to know at ten—to be curious about marriage. Already it held mystery and allurements. She wanted to get married when she grew up. Of course she would marry. She wasn’t peculiar like Julia’s Aunt Fanny. She wasn’t going to be a school-teacher. She’d marry and have a new house and a servant girl and—and children. She’d talk, like all married women did, about servants and cooking—and other things.

When Flora was twelve, she went to dancing school on Saturday afternoons, like all the other girls. She went in the surrey with Grace and their cousin, Margaret, whose folks didn’t have a surrey. Each girl carried a party bag for her dancing slippers, and you put on the dancing slippers in the dressing-room, before you went into the hall.

Professor Watterman was the dancing teacher. He was a little man, too fat, but light on his feet and very erect and pompous.

“All in line, now, toes out, heels together, first position,” he would say. “Now, altogether, one diagonal step forward with the right foot for the girls, left foot straight out on two, bring right foot to left foot on three—now, left foot back, as if you were dancing in a square—now, altogether . . . with music this time. . . .”

Flora learned the waltz and the two-step. She learned “special” dances, too, and a minuet for visitors’ day. As nearly as she could tell, she learned the steps and danced just as well as the

other girls did. She didn't get "called down" for taking the wrong foot, like Jessie Rogers, or for being pigeon-toed, like Myrtle Stone.

This was Flora's first meeting with boys, outside of chance neighborhood encounters and at school—there weren't many boys in Elm Street and she had no brothers. Boys had always interested Flora in a far-away, mysterious fashion.

When the steps were learned, with counting and to music, "Young gentlemen may now ask the young ladies to dance with them," Professor Waterman would say. A pause, a shuffling of feet. In the middle of the bare dance hall there would be a row of boys and a row of girls, facing. The girls would be a-flutter in bright colors. The boys would be neatly sober, with shined shoes, in suits of black or pepper-and-salt mixtures. Against the wall, in little groups, silently admiring, would sit mothers and aunts.

For the first few times, Flora found, pleasantly, some strange boy in front of her, bowing, as the music started. They would dance away, in awkward hops, each one counting audibly.

However, as Flora learned to differentiate Lucian Rogers from Paul Black—they didn't go to her school—or to recognize the superior quality of Morris Howell's dancing, she noticed a strange and unbelievable development. Boys didn't like to dance with her! She wasn't popular! She was bewildered and accepted the fact only after many Saturday afternoons' demonstrations.

Not that the boys wouldn't dance with her. Yielding to Professor Waterman's tactful, "There's Miss Flora—ask her if you may have the pleasure of a dance," and mothers' less skillful urgings, "Don't stand here by me—there, go get Flora Gordon—she hasn't any one," Flora did not remain partnerless. But she knew she wasn't sought after, rushed for, as were some of the other girls, her own sister, Grace, even.

Flora wasn't an ugly girl. Her eyes were a pleasant light gray. She was a trifle too thin, even at twelve, and her

hair was a straight light brown. Her nose was just the least bit too long, even then. But girls with seemingly far less charm were more popular. Flora tried so hard to be a good dancer. She knew she kept time to the music. She tried to obey every definite rule. Yet, in spite of every effort, the boys just didn't care to dance with her. Boys seemed so desirable. She did so want them to like her. There was something about them not quite understandable—but interesting.

It never occurred to Flora not to go to dancing school. Of course not. She went with a sort of hope and dumb ache. At home she would think about it. Did this mean that she wasn't going to have beaux—wasn't going to—to get married?

Perhaps the beginning of Flora's unpopularity was an accident, based on some unnoticeable trifle, a dress of an ugly color, a cold in the head. Perhaps it was based, even then, on Flora's lack of beauty and sex attraction. At any rate, the thing, once started, kept on, grew, even, communicated itself to the boys who did not go to dancing school, to mother, to other girls.

Already, when little groups of girls gathered to giggle over things, on the school grounds, Flora was definitely an outsider. Was there a mysterious world she couldn't enter. Were—were boys so—so different? Of course Flora was one of "the crowd" because her folks lived in Elm Street, were important people. There was always that feeling, though, of not understanding nor fitting in—a line of separation.

II

WHEN Flora was in High School, her father died. He had been a quiet, studious man, a lawyer, who had paid little enough attention to Flora, but his death made a difference in the family life. He left very little money or life insurance. This meant a cutting down of all expenses. The colored man disappeared. The horse and surrey were sold. That didn't matter so much—

families were already beginning to get automobiles and even in his lifetime, Mr. Gordon had been firm against that luxury. The servant girl was discharged, even, and Flora and Grace helped their mother with the housework.

Mrs. Gordon was a thin, nervous little woman with straggling hair, partly grey, now, and light eyes behind thick glasses. She was always worrying unnecessarily over trifles. The house, during Mr. Gordon's lifetime, always kept prosperous looking by Spring coats of yellow paint with white paint for the sawed-out ornaments, soon lapsed into a sort of grey. The sheds back of the house seemed to lean a trifle, as neighbours' sheds were replaced by stolid garages with impudent-looking wide doors.

Flora and Grace continued at High School. Grace, in spite of the family losses, was as popular as ever. She was plumper than Flora and her figure was developing into pleasant curves. She could buy the cheapest materials and, in one or two days after school and a Saturday morning, could fashion a most becoming frock with hardly any expense at all.

She tried to teach Flora how to make things, but Flora wasn't gifted that way. Even when Grace helped Flora with her clothes, the finished article, when on Flora, was definitely cheap and unbecoming and showed itself at its true value—a home-made attempt at following current fashions.

Flora went to parties on Friday nights. Usually, she and Grace went together. Occasionally there were masculine attendants for both of them. When the parties were in the homes of boys and girls and were simply candy-pulls or games, Flora enjoyed them. She liked noise, piano-playing and laughter. When they danced, she had a partner usually and when she didn't, it did not make much difference. There was always someone to talk to. Without realizing it, she got into the habit of talking with the chaperon, the mother or aunt or older sister who was

invariably present. She talked as if she were old and settled.

"I don't know why the boys don't like Flora Gordon," these same chaperons would say, later. "She's a nice girl, bright and sensible, too, lots more brains than her sister, Grace."

When Flora was alone with a boy she never knew what to say to him. Even when she was with a boy whom she saw every day at school, she was quite ill at ease. What did other girls say to boys? She knew the secret of popularity—she had read it a hundred times in articles on "How To Be Popular," in newspapers and magazines. The secret was to get a boy to talk about himself. How did one do that? Though, even when a boy did talk about himself to Flora and she thought he was interested, things didn't seem much better. He didn't seem to enjoy himself the way he was supposed to and he would ignore her, the next time he saw her, if there was anyone else to talk to. No boy ever tried to put his arms around Flora or seemed to want to kiss her.

At that time, the girls in the crowd were having definite but in most cases innocent enough love affairs. They would giggle about hugs and kisses.

Flora felt that in some way these love affairs separated her from the other girls more than anything else could possibly have done. She was immensely curious about love—about what the girls said and did when they were alone with boys. When she read love stories—and she spent much of her time reading—she would try to picture herself in the most romantic situations. There always seemed something missing, some knowledge denied her. She felt she could have been able to appreciate these scenes if she had actually experienced a love affair.

Flora was graduated from High School when she was eighteen, just a year before Grace, who was two years younger, but quicker. If the family had had money, Flora would have made a formal début. If the family had been poorer—there was just enough money to get along on, if they were careful—

she would have had to go to work. Even now, she probably could have been a school-teacher. It was the one avenue of employment in Loganberg open for girls of "nice family." Flora protested against teaching. Weren't teachers always old maids?

Flora, eighteen, made no *début*. She was not exactly included in grown-up parties but occasionally, when Grace was invited places, she was invited, too—to large, not exclusive affairs. Flora wasn't exactly a wall-flower, either. The less desirable young men were always put in the way of dancing with her.

Flora was too old for the affairs of the High School crowd, which Grace still attended, so, until Grace got through High School, Flora had rather a lonely time. She felt that she was *waiting*—that it didn't matter. She thought of pleasant, romantic things. After all, there was plenty of time for romance. When Grace was eighteen and "out," then they would start having really good times.

Flora helped her mother with the housework. She read all of the sentimental novels the rather small Loganberg library afforded. Instinctively, she shrunk from the new realistic novels that were beginning to appear. She liked stories that would carry her away, out of Loganberg, stories that would allow her to dream, by the hour, after she had finished them—herself as the heroine and some handsome, unknown man as the hero. Of course.

Grace was graduated from High School and became, immediately, without a *début*, a popular member of the older crowd. Flora and Grace each made thin, inexpensive frocks with ruffles for trimming. Grace was plump and not too tall and rather clever about curling her straight hair. Flora was tall and thin and her hair just wouldn't curl. It began to straggle a bit, like her mother's.

With Grace "in society," things were better for Flora. She and Grace received invitations to the same parties. Usually there was a cavalier for each of

them. But Grace's young man was always one of the town's desirables while Flora was escorted by some bashful youth who danced poorly and was bereft alike of conversational ability, money and charm. At least it was better than not having an escort.

Flora made a desperate effort at popularity. It was not so much a desire for marriage as a desire for masculine attention, a wanting to know about love and romance—the things the other girls whispered about. She felt that she was outside some definite wall. Other girls laughed and had secrets, talked over what "he" had said. Flora got the idea, soon enough, that whenever a man was alone with a girl the whole atmosphere changed, a sort of transformation took place, in which every sentence had a new meaning. Men weren't like that when she was with them. They were stolid, stupid, ordinary. They talked quite as girls did, only slower and more awkwardly and with less animation.

At parties, now, all of Flora's dances were not taken. She went through all of the usual, pitiful subterfuges, staying in the dressing room, talking busily with the chaperons, though she knew no one was deceived, if indeed any one noticed her at all. She had simply become an unpopular girl.

The knowledge hurt her even while it was not new. She had so hoped for some change—when she was really a young lady—in herself, maybe, in her knowledge of the world or of men that would make her, all at once, popular, sought after, like the other girls. She had miserable times at parties and would cry after she came home. Yet, she wouldn't give up going. That was too much an acknowledgment of defeat.

After all, if she didn't go to parties, what would she have? There would be nothing at all. She couldn't meet men any other way. What else was there in life?

III

WHEN Grace, Flora's sister, was

twenty, she married Freddie Richards. Freddie was not one of the best catches in town, but, after all, how could Grace expect that, without money? He was of a good family, though, and that counted. He was with his father in the wholesale grocery business and though there were four other brothers to share the profits, it meant a good living, comfort.

There was a quiet home wedding and Freddie built for his bride a new white bungalow with an awkward roof out in Kensington Addition, where all of the new, attractive homes were going up. Elm Street, once the best street in Loganberg, now had stores and garages for several blocks, where it joined the business street of the town. The nicer people were all moving out to Kensington or to Oakdale Addition.

With Grace married, Flora and her mother settled down into rather humdrum domesticity. The other girls in the crowd were getting married, too. Flora was twenty-two. Of course she was young. Still, at twenty-five, in Loganberg, girls were considered old maids. It may be different, of course, in cities where girls have careers, but in Loganberg, if a girl hasn't caught a man by that time—

Of course, she would get some one—how silly to worry. After all, there weren't any men in Loganberg Flora really cared about, just silly young boys or men who acted so heavy and serious.

Several new men moved to Loganberg, young doctors and lawyers. Not realizing her status of unpopularity, some of these new men, for just the shortest possible time, would shower slight attentions on Flora. She would be extraordinarily grateful to them, always trying to make herself interesting and to please them by her conversation. Before long, some brighter flowers would attract their attentions and they would disappear in the crowd, aloof, desirable, unattainable.

Now, as the other girls she knew married, Flora had an even more definite feeling of being on the outside of something that counted. The girls she

knew, young matrons, now seemed to have changed. They knew things she didn't know, understood things she didn't understand. The same things she had wondered about when she was little reappeared now, marvelously magnified and important. She remembered what Julia Morrison had said, when she was very young, "How do you know you'll ever marry?" Julia was Mrs. Morris Howell, and had a new bungalow, near Grace in Kensington.

That was it. How did Flora know she ever would marry? It wasn't just marriage. It was the things that marriage began to mean to her. Wouldn't she ever know things—be on the inside? Marriage changed women, just as being in love and being hugged and kissed had changed them, when they were younger. Each step had taken them farther away from her. Marriage took them a very real distance.

She went to see Grace, sometimes, in the mornings. Though Grace and Freddie had an automobile, Grace usually did her own work. Grace frequently asked Flora to assist her with the house work, with bed-making. Grace and Freddie slept in a bed of Colonial design, with high posts, a double bed. When Flora stood across from Grace and helped make up the bed, pulling the sheets into place, punching the pillows into smooth rectangles, she had an actual feeling of doing something immodest, of peering into things not meant for her. Her brother-in-law—a man—slept in this bed. When Grace carelessly took Freddie's striped pajamas and hung them on a hook in his closet, with an impatient, "I bet Freddie wouldn't ever learn to hang up his clothes if he lived to be a hundred," Flora actually shivered. Her sister . . . lived with a man . . . was familiar with him . . . saw him dressing and undressing!

Flora began watching other couples she knew. They, too, went through this extraordinary intimacy. Most of the girls she knew were married, now. A few of them began to have babies, little crying things, always needing their

diapers changed and bottles warmed. This didn't disturb Flora. After all—having a baby . . . you didn't need that for experience. Men didn't give birth to babies. They didn't need the experience of childbirth to teach them things.

Flora heard someone say that you could tell by a woman's eyes if she had had experiences. The remark was made one day while a group of women were together, sewing—Flora's friends, mostly married now and separated from her by that unsurmountable barrier.

"That young Johnson girl—they say she's no good—they say you can tell by a girl's eyes. . . ."

"Yes, I've always heard that, by looking into a girl's eyes. . . ."

Flora pondered over that. She found herself looking into women's eyes—you probably couldn't tell by a man's, men are different, are always having such awful experiences. . . . A married woman's eyes—Grace's eyes . . . Julia's and Hazel's eyes . . . could you tell that they knew—that they had been through—experiences?

Flora looked in young girl's eyes, searching for signs.

The women of Flora's acquaintance were always remembering that they were married, that she was not. No matter what subject came up, they would refer to their own state, "you can't understand that, Flora," or "we really ought to stop—honest, this is no way to talk in front of an unmarried woman. . . ."

IV

As Flora grew older, she stopped going to evening parties altogether. New crops of *débutantes* appeared each year. In a small town, a girl becomes old quickly, everyone knows her exact age. She either takes her place in the married set or disappears, socially, altogether. A few unmarried girls held on, Jessie Rogers, but she had a sharp tongue and lots of money and was considered "good company," and Roberta Breckenridge, who had four brothers who saw that she got to everything. Besides, Roberta had been engaged and

her fiancé had died, so that took away some of the stigma of being unmarried.

Flora had nothing. The house in Elm Street became shabbier and shabbier. As the cost of living advanced, there was no money for repairs. Some of the little, unnecessary ornaments around the porch, perhaps dimly aware of their ugliness, fell off, and were never replaced by a simpler nor better finish. The furniture, never especially good, grew threadbare in spots and was not recovered.

Flora went to afternoon parties with the crowd of women she had always gone with. She spent afternoons with them, talking and sewing and gossiping. She liked these women, of course. Undoubtedly they didn't mean to seem aloof, knowing, superior. Flora went to see Grace frequently and spent afternoons at Grace's, with the two babies, when Grace wanted to go somewhere. Then Freddie would drive Flora home, after dinner, in the car. She never knew what to say to Freddie, even to Freddie, her sister's husband. They would talk of Grace and the children and the weather and "isn't Loganberg building up nicely—not many towns can show a finer residential district."

When Flora was thirty-one, her mother died. Freddie attended to the details of the funeral. Neighbors came in with flowers and hushed words of sympathy. The undertaker and his assistant arranged things—the coffin—brought in dozens of camp chairs. The family minister preached the sermon. Her mother was laid next to her father in Calvary Cemetery.

Things went on about the same. There were slight overtures from Freddie and Grace that she come to live with them. It would be handy to have Flora around—on account of the children . . . and yet, if she were there, she would be there all the time—for dinner when the bridge club met, when company, young couples, came in. Flora decided to stay where she was. Grace agreed that was best—Flora could have the old house. Grace took her share of the money that their father had left

to their mother, to be divided between the daughters at her death.

Flora had just enough money to live in the old house with even fewer luxuries than formerly. She did her own work, though she wasn't a good housekeeper and neglected things. She did the simplest sort of cooking, the kind a woman is apt to do, if she is alone and is not naturally a good housekeeper—tea and toast for breakfast, bread and jam for lunch, a bit of ham or a chop, occasionally, for the evening meal.

Flora didn't try to curl her straight, rather fine hair any more. It straggled, badly, as her mother's had done, around her ears and at the back of her neck. Her eyes had been hurting her—it was hard for her to read—so she went to an oculist and found that it was necessary for her to wear rather thick glasses over her light eyes, as her mother had done. Glasses made her eyes look smaller and made her look older, too.

Flora's life was lonely, now, though she did not mind, really, took things for granted. She spent one or two afternoons each week with Grace's children—the day Grace's afternoon bridge club met and perhaps one other day, when Grace wanted to go shopping. Occasionally in the evening, she stayed there, when a theatrical company visited Loganberg and Grace and Freddie wanted to attend the performance. Of course Grace could have hired someone, but you know how unreliable nurse-girls are, these days—and expensive.

Once a week, usually, Flora spent with a group of women, her old friends, sewing and talking. She was not included in the Matron's Bridge Club, of course, though she was occasionally asked as a substitute, when one of the regular members was visiting out of town. She was not a good bridge player.

Whole days and evenings Flora spent by herself. She rather liked mooning over things, wasting long hours. She read quantities of cheap magazines, buying them every month, the day they arrived at the bookshop. She kept up with half a dozen serial stories of the

most lurid kind, read numerous short stories and vapid interviews and accounts of the lives of motion picture actresses, all of the details of which she believed. These people—in stories and actresses—they knew about life—had experiences—knew the things her sister knew . . . more, even.

Why hadn't these things come to her—these important things . . . love, romance, experiences that counted?

Every day Flora noticed things she knew she would have understood better if . . . if she had been married. Poetry—didn't poets always talk of love—the fulfilment of love? Short stories—the things her sister and her friends said—music—art, even. If she only understood! Love makes the world go round . . . of course.

Days, then, of thinking, of pondering, of dreaming. Would life go on like this, to the end?

V

WHEN Flora was thirty-six, quite without any planning on her part, she found herself talking occasionally to Joe Morrison.

She had known Joe Morrison all of her life but had never paid any attention to him. He was an uncle of Julia and Hazel, who had been neighbors in her girlhood and who had been married for years. Joe Morrison had always seemed an old man to Flora. That is, he was perhaps fifty, now, which meant that he had been thirty when she was fifteen . . . forty when she was twenty-five. She couldn't even remember him excepting as a settled, married man. He had never had any children and his wife had been dead for five years.

Joe Morrison was a thin man, a little bent, at fifty, with rather sunken, leathery cheeks, an almost bald head and a generous gray mustache. He had an interest in the firm of Morrison and Cameron, manufacturers of glass bottles, one of Loganberg's small but prosperous factories. Joe Morrison's clothes were black and dusty, spots on

his vest, a button off. His collars were low with an edge which told of infrequent changings.

Flora did not attach any significance to these meetings with Morrison. They seemed most casual. He would meet her on the street, turn around, if he weren't going her way, walk several blocks with her. One evening she was surprised to find him at the door when unexpectedly the door-bell rang. He came in, stayed half an hour, talked disjointedly about mutual acquaintances. Two weeks later he called again and asked Flora to go to the motion picture theatre with him.

Flora liked pictures but never went alone at night and seldom enough during the day. She felt sorry for Morrison, realizing that he was lonely. He had sold his house after his wife's death and was staying at rather a decent but not especially attractive boarding-house.

Two weeks more—after a few more calls, on one of which he brought a large box of candy from the best local confectionery—Morrison asked Flora to marry him. She really had not expected the proposal. All of her life Morrison had been just Hazel's and Julia's "Uncle Joe." *Her* hero would be young and brave and passionate and handsome. Young . . . handsome. . . . Why, she wasn't young—not even nice looking. She hadn't had any other chances—never would have. Joe Morrison was a good man. Why—she'd be married . . .

Flora realized, even as she consented to marry Morrison that it was more because she would find out about the hidden things that had become so important and had been so mysterious all these years—more because she would become one again with the group of women she knew, the friends of her girlhood—than because of any real affection for him, any need of companionship. To find out—to know things . . . life . . . love . . . sex things. At last life was opening up hidden, mysterious things. . . .

Flora dug into her small capital—that was all right, now—to get things

for the wedding. She bought nice underthings, muslin with narrow lace on them. She simply couldn't buy the thin silk garments the other women were wearing—they didn't seem right, decent. She bought a traveling dress of blue serge—they were going to Eastern Springs in another part of the state for two weeks—a black cape, some new blouses, a hat with a perky blue feather at the side. Marriage!

They were married at the minister's house, with Grace and Freddie and Morrison's two nieces, Julia and Hazel, as attendants and witnesses. They then went to Hazel's home, which happened to be the largest in the family, for a wedding luncheon. Hazel's and Julia's husbands were there. Everything was jolly, Flora thought, though she noticed odd smiles on the faces of the others, at times. Was it because she wasn't—so young? Because Morrison was—getting on, too? What did that matter? She'd be married—after a few weeks they'd forget when she had married. She'd be as much married as any of them. Flora and Morrison left for Eastern Springs on the three o'clock train. Flora was frightened, yet exalted, shy, eager.

At the end of two weeks Flora and Morrison came back to Loganberg to Flora's home. They were to live there.

For weeks, then, working-men were about, making repairs, removing the worst and most removable of the jigsaw ornaments, putting white paint on the old house. The roof became a resplendent green. After all, it was Flora's house, Morrison had said. No use moving with such a nice house—so handy for him to go to business—nearer than any of those new additions the young folks seemed to like. Foolishness—Elm Street was good enough for anybody. As long as Flora was supplying the house, though, it was up to him to have it repaired. A house will lose all value if it goes to rack and ruin. The furniture was repaired. There were new and fairly gay slip covers in the living room. Partitions were knocked out, upstairs, so that the

bedroom she and Morrison occupied would be larger, airier. Her old bedroom furniture was repainted.

She was married! The women she knew called on her, as she had thought they would, congratulatory, intimate. If they smiled peculiarly, Flora pretended not to notice. She was not asked to join the Matron's Bridge Club because the list was full and there were already quite a list of matrons on the waiting list—anyhow, Flora didn't care much about bridge.

The women chatted about things, as they always had done as they sewed—about husbands and love and children. Flora was included, now, in a way. At least there were no barriers.

Flora was married. She knew all about marriage. The things that had tinted her life, that had seemed alluring, charming, that had beckoned her on, that she had longed for . . . where were they? What were they? Oh, of course . . . she knew.

She was no longer as she had been. And yet—romance. . . . Was this all her friends had meant? This! Morrison—an old man . . . passion at fifty! If she had only known before her marriage!

In a way, marriage was all right. Yes, she was lucky, as her friends said. Still, wasn't Morrison lucky, too. Of course—a man. . . . Flora liked the garage that had taken the place of the old carriage-house, the little car, and being addressed as "Mrs. Morrison." She liked having more money—Morrison gave her an adequate household allowance, though he was far from generous—the woman who came in by the day for cleaning and washing.

Yet, in many ways, life wasn't as pleasant as it had been. Flora had to get up early in the morning and prepare Morrison's breakfast, and she had formed the habit of sleeping late. She had to attend, briskly, to household

duties, dish washing, cleaning, ordering. Morrison came home for lunch, another meal—cooking and dishes. By six, dinner had to be cooked. Flora had to dress for dinner, even, a clean dress or a fresh collar. After dinner, Morrison insisted on being talked to or going to the movies or a vaudeville show. Dinners, dishes, talking. . . .

Flora didn't dislike Morrison. Still, he was tiresome, a bore, who talked on and on about business and political affairs and things he had read in the papers. Flora had to read current news in order to know what he was talking about. He laughed at her magazines, thought she spent money foolishly—her one luxury. There wasn't so much time for reading, anyhow, nor for dreaming.

Well, when she was a child and Julia had hinted that maybe she wouldn't marry, Julia had been wrong. She had got married after all . . . that's what she had wanted. Marriage! Where was all of the imagined charm and loveliness? Had the girls fooled her? Of course they hadn't fooled her on purpose, with all of their secrets and allusions. Maybe, if you don't marry a man of fifty, a widower—if you marry young. . . . Still, maybe, there was something lacking in her, the reason why she didn't thrill at . . . at marriage . . . the reason, even, why she hadn't had opportunities of an earlier marriage. Maybe . . . love. . . .

Probably being married was better than living alone. Everyone said that. How awful Morrison was, really rough—and smelling unpleasantly of tobacco, even after he had bathed. . . . How leathery his skin was! Flora knew the things, now, that other women knew. Unpleasant . . . definitely so. If she had been younger—maybe—if her husband had been. . . . Life held no barriers, now, no delightful mysteries. Nothing.



A Certainty

By André Saville

LAST year I desired her greatly, but without success.

Last night I engaged her in chatter and she kept insisting how she adored her husband.

I then realized that it would be only a question of waiting.



Song in Autumn Meadows

By Muna Lee

WHAT memory of April has the November hedge;
What sore reminder of the April fire
That ran in leaping flame to the field's edge?
And I, what memory of a dead desire?

Stalks crude and harsh, or burnt leaves, crumbling dry—
What could the lost spring pageant mean to them:
The poignant moon, the gray rain slanting by,
Thorn and white petal from the single stem?



BOOKKEEPER—a man who starts in by making an entry and ends with making a get-away.



ARIA—the part in which the prima donna tries to conceal the limitations of her voice.



The Pantaloon Parnassus

By George Jean Nathan

I

CHALK down "Rain," the play made from W. Somerset Maugham's brilliantly fine story "Miss Thompson," familiar to you from the pages of this great gazette of the uplift, as something worth seeing. Cruelly penetrating, devastating in its enlightened iconoclasm, and electrically dramatic, it smashes through the rouged and tinselled proscenium of the conventional theatre like a locomotive through a pretty paper hoop. And behind it it leaves in sorry shreds that a thousand "Fools" and the like should never again be able soberly to reweave for an adult audience the hundred and one pink sentimentalities of its own and contiguous themes. The dramatists, John Colton and Clemence Randolph, have, it is true, here and there introduced the dry touch of the shop-stage into the Maugham story, but in the main they have handled that story directly, obediently and skilfully. And its vigour is as ever-present as it was on the printed page.

The theatre play with the man of God for its hero has always followed a more or less set menu. It has either pictured him as succumbing to the lure of the flesh, in the person of Mignon La Deauville, the celebrated danseuse, after he has taken to the cloth, or to the same lure, in the person of the exotic Lady Violet Tremaine, wife of Sir Hugh Tremaine, M.P., just before he has taken to the cloth and while making a stop-over

at Damascus on his way to the Holy Land. When it has not moved on these tracks, it has exhibited him, to the accompaniment of the "Whither thou goest I will go . . . thy people shall be my people" speech, following the beautiful pagan Analgesique into the arena, there to be devoured by Nero's lions, or it has pictured him as renouncing love and Mrs. Pat Campbell in time with a Wurlitzer organ and bringing down a lugubrious curtain by flinging his arms toward the backdrop whereon a stagehand has illuminated the Nile with a Kliegl water effect. The clergymen of Henry Arthur Jones have been so many matinée idols spouting Upton Sinclair or Emile Coué, where those of Robert Hichens have been so many spouting Elinor Glyn and Fannie Hill Sudermann's Paradise-bookmakers have been either German James A. Stillmans or Ziegfeld Billy Sundays, and William Vaughn Moody's a mixture of Schlatter, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and Herbert Kaufman. The abbés of the French drama are merely Pinero actors in long black skirts. And Ibsen has committed the paradoxical blunder of giving Brand and Rosmer minds!

The lines of the churchly hero have been, in the aggregate, either so many Sunday School mottoes or Hall Caine explosions. When they have not been something like "God builds his temples on the ruin of churches, in the human heart," they have been "Take me! I give my life, my will, my soul, to you! Only persuade me

that I shall meet her again." And when they have not been something akin to "I have sinned—as David sinned. It is my just sentence to go forth from you, not as your guide, your leader, your priest; but as a broken sinner, humbled in the dust before the Heaven he has offended," they may be relied upon to be something like "Be what you will, do what you will, go where you will—but, Glory, come back to me!"

Now, against such amiable drivel, come Maugham and his aides with this study in evangelistic biology and, with it, the other side of the shield. We have here, for the first time within my knowledge of the theatre, the portrait of a man of God as man rather than play-actor. The nature of that portrait you know sufficiently well from the published story. It may be an isolated case, but I presume to doubt it. It may be too piercingly bitter. Again I doubt it. It may be too violent in its shadings. Yet again I doubt it. It is, to this mind anyway, the most dramatically intelligent, the most educatedly sophisticated and in all the most mature play on its subject matter that has met these eyes in the American theatre. The presenting company, headed by Miss Jeanne Eagels, is excellent. If I have omitted a record of certain obvious defects and crudities in the scheme of the drama as opposed to the story, I have done so deliberately. Anything this good is welcome enough.

II

IN "The Fool," to which passing reference has been made, Channing Pollock allies himself with Charles Rann Kennedy and the rest of the Oberammergau bootleggers. For here we have another of the ubiquitous distillations of the so-called Christ play. My views of these Christ plays have already been expressed at considerable length in these pages. They also follow—as the man of God plays

follow—a more or less conventional schedule, and everyone does one of them soon or late in life. I myself, in my younger and more serious years, tackled one and narrowly escaped a richly merited jail as a result. They deal, these plays, either with a male member of the Actors' Equity Association in a white Empire gown who appears suddenly behind a transparency above the bookcase, says "Let him who is without sin cast the first stone" in a tone suggesting that grandma and grandpa are dead in the next room, and hence represents the Saviour, or with a white spotlight that suddenly shines through the window of some evil rathskeller, produces a strange hush among the assembled raucous bibuli and is proclaimed by the little crippled boy Gustav, in a tremulous whisper, to be Him. When it doesn't treat of either of these, it generally has to do with showing what would happen to Christ were He to come to Great Neck, Long Island; with a pitch dark stage apparently containing a modern scene and modern peoples which when it finally lights up is shown to be Jerusalem at the time of the Crucifixion—thus proving conclusively to the audience that Judas O'Grady and the Colonel's lady are brothers and sisters under their skins; with an old Wilson Barrett tub-thumper wherein the arena has been transformed into a church, an off-stage melodion substituted for the roaring of lions, and Marcus Superbus allusively renamed the Rev. Dr. Joseph Christy; or, finally, with a rattling good old hoochie-coochie show palmed off on Dr. Frank Crane and the Church White List by the shrewd device of laying the scene in Palestine, putting a line in the program to this effect: *Time: "The Beginning of the Christian Era,"* and naming the chorus men after our theatrical managers and the girls after the Arabian Nights, the Satyricon, or so many French cordials.

In "The Fool," Mr. Pollock goes

over much the same ground that Upton Sinclair travels in his "They Call Me Carpenter." Mr. Pollock takes his Christ character, sets him down in New York, and leads him through a series of bouts with the allegedly typical citizenry of the day, dumping him eventually into the climax of the third act of George M. Cohan's "The Miracle Man." This climax, the seemingly miraculous sudden cure of a crippled child and the consequent allaying of hostile doubts on the part of the abashed and shrinking skeptics, serves Mr. Pollock quite as effectively as it served Mr. Cohan and Mr. Frank Packard before him. But aside from it I can detect little in "The Fool" that, for all its specious theatrical lamellar magnetism and undeniably passionate seriousness, is not at once philosophically dubious and emotionally obvious. May I add, however, that I tender these opinions with considerable misgiving, since I observe in the newspaper advertisements of the play that it is enthusiastically endorsed—so read the advertisements—"By These Great Men: John Haynes Holmes, Thomas E. Patton, Alexander Woolcott, John S. Sumner, Nicholas Murray Butler and James P. Holland."

III

It seems to me that Mr. Brock Pemberton erred gravely when he advertised Pirandello's "Six Characters in Search of an Author" for adult intelligences only and warned all morons to keep clear of his theatre for, though the stratagem deceived the customary number of young reviewers into looking upon the play as a great intellectual treat, it only confounded—and it may be to Mr. Pemberton's final financial disadvantage—those adult intelligences who went to the play and found not the anticipatedly boring excursion into metaphysics but simply a good show, like "The Old Soak" or "The Torch Bearers" or Savoy and Brennan. The

Pirandello play is no more an intellectual adventure than "The Bat" or "The Last Warning." It appeals to the mind as a riddle or cross-word puzzle appeals. It keeps the mind on the jump not with ideas and philosophies but with clever, mystifying dramaturgic tricks and evasions. It is a play at which the mind thinks with eyes and ears. It does not make any deeper inroads into the brain than Molnar's "Gardeofficier" (similarly a trickish play), or "King Lear," or such Continental plays of much the same school as Rittner's well-known theatrical satire "The Man in the Prompter's Box" and the less deservedly well-known "Hydra" of Karl Ettlinger and "Dress Rehearsal" of Vosberg.

The absence of intellectual drive is, of course, not a detriment to the Pirandello play, but a considerable asset. The stage, as I ventured last month with regard to Géraldy's "Aimer," is not the place for consistent and resolute intelligence; it is the place, rather, for merely a deftly deceptive simulacrum of intelligence. The theatre is the playground neither for Mr. Pemberton's "adult intelligences" nor his "morons," but for adult intelligences in their deliberate moron moments. "Six Characters in Search of an Author" nicely and appropriately meets that combination of vacationing intelligence and sportive, idiotic mood. To imagine that Pirandello meant seriously the philosophies which he has placed in the mouth of his mad central character is to imagine that Ibsen meant seriously the philosophies which he exposed in "The Wild Duck," or that Ziegfeld actually considers Lillian Lorraine Art. To anyone familiar with the Italian's past literary performances it is a safe assumption that here, once again, he was attempting a practical joke on that considerable clan of amiable wienerschnitzls that is happy to pay out its money for the privilege of being deluded into thinking that it is thinking. There is no

more real thought in his play than there is in "Krausmeyer's Alley" or a drama by Augustus Thomas. There is merely a shadowgraph of thought. I accordingly recommend the play—if Mr. Pemberton's ill-advised advertising has not already landed it in the storehouse—to all intelligent persons who are sufficiently intelligent not to wish for intelligence in the theatre.

IV

THE Capek brothers' play "The Insect," locally rechristened "The World We Live In," is a fantastic mixture of Aristophanes, Fabre, Rostand's "Chantecler," the Pixley-Luders musical comedy "Woodland" and Don Marquis' archy the vers libre cockroach, with a philosophic jazz motif that is a blend of Maeterlinck, Joseph Conrad, Andreas Latzko and B. F. Keith. Its aim is to draw, in terms allegorical and satiric, a parallel between the life and ambitions of mortal man and of the insect kingdom. But out of its stage crowded with a hundred characters, spectacular scenery and lighting, and perspiring hidden musicians it achieves what is in the main merely aurally obvious if ocularly diverting vaudeville. Somehow the exhibit obdurately suggests certain portions of a parody novel called "Puppy-Cow," printed not long ago in a magazine published by the boys and girls of the University of California. For example, Chapter IV, entitled "Incident in Men":

Men.

Men.

Men.

Idols decapitated . . . bitter-sweet gangrene . . . nauseating caviar . . . wild tropical canaries beating their wings against broken hopes of tomorrow-day . . . a lettuce leaf. God!

And for even better example, the final chapter:

Seliscious' soul gains self-assertion. The crucial instant is approaching.

It is here!

.
.
.

It has passed!

And at the end Seliscious had done nothing. My God, it was tremendous!

The Capeks have with deafening shouts and frantic alarms aimed at the peak of the Matterhorn, and have brought down an icicle. In one of their acts—a spectacular pacifist argument in terms of two armies of ants contending for an infinitesimal strip of land between two blades of grass—they have, with the help of the scenic background, costumes and lighting of the local Lee Simonson, succeeded in buiding up a remarkably effective stage picture, and one that is not a little moving. But in the rest of the play they have managed their theme very weakly. Their point of view is in general cut and dried, and there is a negligible amount of saving humour. As in Aristophanes' "Birds," we have a fugitive human being (in this instance there is one in place of two) who falls into the domain of the insects. But this human being is made a humourless compère without imagination who views and translates the insect drama much in the manner of an indignant Norwegian Balieff. The insect drama in turn is starkly literal and not infrequently fuddled. As depicted by the Capeks, the life of the butterflies, for instance, has no bearing whatsoever upon entomology; it concerns itself rather entirely and not a little sophomorically with etymology: the word butterfly as employed in the vernacular to fit the frivolous human gadabout. The butterfly episode thus concerns butterflies only in so far as the actors and actresses are dressed in fluttering silks; its plan, dialogue and action otherwise fit exactly any second-rate Viennese comedy of amour. Rename the Capeks' butterflies Felix Staufner, Agnes Staufner and Dr. Guido Wernig and you have something very much resembling some such thing as

Schnitzler's "Festival of Bacchus." The episode treating of the beetles and crickets is as literal as a school-boy's textbook on entomology. There is in it nothing that one may not find in such a manual. It may be described as a Fokine ballet without dancing. The act dealing with the ants is similarly literal but, by virtue of really brilliant staging, evokes, as noted, a powerful theatre mood. Simonson has never done anything remotely approaching his work for this act. While perhaps coloured by Jessner, it is inventive, intensely dramatic and thoroughly well keyed. The epilogue to the play is Sixth Avenue Maeterlinck, pseudo-allegorical and mystical tingel-tangel played in a mauve light. The final curtain descends upon the spectacle of a baby in a mother's arms and some opaque Czecho-Slovakian philosophy spoken by Robert Edeson in a voice bursting with emotion. The exhibit, in sum, is a freak play that engages less for the play than for the manner in which it has been staged.

V

SOME years ago Julian Street—I believe it was he, though the piece was published anonymously—wrote a highly entertaining and extremely acute article on the New York newspaper reviewers for *Harper's Weekly*. He observed, among other things, that when they didn't lean so far forward in behalf of a friend that they bumped their noses on their toes, they leaned so far backward—by way of attesting to their mock freedom from favouritism—that they bumped their heads on their heels. The gentlemen recently suffered the second gymnastic on the occasion of the attempt to inaugurate, in the Punch and Judy Theatre, a species of American Ueberbrettel. This attempt, though unfortunately not entirely successful—I say unfortunately, since the idea seems to me to have been one of the best things launched locally

in my time—was certainly something commendable; and what is more, in at least three or four instances of execution, it was happy enough to have justified the whole enterprise. But, since it was fashioned and set in motion by men who are in the main the chief executives of the New York Reviewers' Equity Association or, as it is more commonly known, the New York Log-Roller Chapter of the Woodmen of the World—since, as I say, it was sponsored by some of these, their fratres in urbe, bent upon proving their unquestionable open-mindedness and encompassing fairness, had at them with axes, indiscriminately chopping down the good with the bad, discharging loud sardonic sneezes, making jokes on the effort in the hearing of the commercial managers standing in the lobby and otherwise proving less their open-mindedness and unassailable integrity than their incapability as critics.

It is true, as I have said, that some of the "Forty-Niners'" show was undeniably amateurish and dull, but it is a mark of my own incapability as a critic if my judgment is in error when I record that a lot of the show was immeasurably superior in originality, in viewpoint, and in wit and humour to anything of its kind displayed in New York this season or last. Robert Benchley's drive speech is the wittiest thing of the kind I have heard anywhere—and I have heard a number of attempts at the same species of humour in other places—two particularly sour specimens in the much-vaunted Paris and Berlin halls. George S. Kaufman's "Life in the Back Pages," life as it would be if people acted the way the advertisements allege they act, is thoroughly original, well worked out, civilized slapstick humour. Ring Lardner's sketch, "The Tridget of Greva," with its spectacle of three men fishing from rowboats in a drawing-room, is superior nonsense, funny enough to crack the rib of a Metho-

dist deacon. Marc Connelly's dance numbers and introductory address (murdered by the professional May Irwin) are of the stuff of genuine music show comedy. Benchley's and Miss Dorothy Parker's burlesque historical play with Richelieu periodically speaking idiotically inappropriate aphorisms, with the plot hoarsely detailed by the First Guard and Second Guard walking back and forth Rogers Brothers fashion, and with General Grant taking over General Lee's sword after the fall of the Bastille, is juicy low fun, with not a little tasty satire in it. And F. P. Adams' burlesque musical comedy program for "The Love Girl," with its countless songs on "Can This Be Love?", "Love, Love, Love," (duetto); "My Garden of Love," "In Love With You" (reprise), "When Love Comes Trip, Trip, Tripping," "Love Me Forever," "The Love I Bear Thee," "You Never Can Tell About Love," and so on to "Just Love," is gay stuff no less. If all this is as dull and stupid as these gentlemen's self-conscious friends say, then I shall give up dramatic criticism and begin praising the great and incomparable wit, humour, finesse, esprit, nuance, verve, délicatesse and pot-au-feu of Russian vaudeville.

VI

MOST of the local reviews of John Barrymore as Hamlet read infinitely less like dramatic criticism than like *affaires d'amour*. The chorus of passionate adulation with its counterpoint of admiring sighs and blubbers is broken into only by Mr. Towse, of the *Post*, who sternly objects to Barrymore—as he objects to Joe Cook, Frank Tinney and the Duncan Sisters—on the æsthetic ground that he is not old, English and the victim of a severe rheumatism. Looking over the other reviews I find that everything concerning Barrymore is reviewed save his Hamlet. They read, in sum, something after this fashion: "The ineffable and exotic beauty of his profile that etches itself so unfor-

gettably upon the memory, bringing a thrill of admiration that is half pain, the dark and slender loveliness of his pliant torso, the gracile figure with its slim, clean limbs, broad shoulders and perfectly chiseled head, the lovely black, slightly curly hair, the fascinating movements of his marvelous and princely body, the enchanting youthfulness of the tout ensemble—these combined with the tenderest susceptibility, an expression of almost divine radiance, a regal bearing and a voice to beguile one with thoughts of roses in the dewy mornings of early June—all make John Barrymore beyond peradventure of a doubt the greatest Hamlet of our time—nay, of all time!" Mr. Barrymore is, in good truth, an excellent Hamlet, but the reasons his critics assign for that excellence would make Miss Adele Astaire an even better one.

I take it that there is no longer any question that the proficient modern actor of Hamlet is he who acts the role not with his own intelligence but with the intelligence of his audience. In plainer words, that Hamlet is, figuratively speaking, no longer so much an actor's role as an audience's role, and that the best actor of that role is he who creates the role less than he mirrors the modern audience's creation of it. Forbes-Robertson was a master in this; and Leiber, though conceding vastly more to himself as actor, is similarly a captain of the stratagem. Barrymore comes to us now with the same trick, and manages it admirably. His Hamlet is a calm, cool dramatic critic in the robes of the role; it is an analytical and synthetic shadowgraph of its audience's reactions; it is—and this is where it properly excels—a mere scenario of its emotional implications. Yet it is not, for all its undeniably sound plan and sagacious preparation, entirely successful. After a second view of the performance I am not persuaded that Barrymore's critically exact approach to it, with its obvious wealth of study, scrupulously meticulous voice cultivation and intensive training in gesture, movement and facial play, has not dead-

ened to a degree the human warmth that might have been projected from a less strainfully perfect preliminary self-instruction and artistic castigation. Barrymore's Hamlet is critically so precise that it is at times histrionically defective. It gets across perfectly to all the professional dramatic critics in the audience, but time will show us whether it gets across quite so effectively to those whom acting must more speciously and fully inflame if they are to be brought to an understanding and appreciation of the role with which that acting is concerned. I thus join in the praise of Barrymore, but with certain misgivings. His Hamlet, like a diamond, is glittering, many coloured, hard, brilliant—but cold, intensely cold. We get from it the reflected rays of intelligence, but never—or at best rarely—the rays of heat. It is, this Hamlet, a dazzling and intricate piece of machinery, put together with a fine proficiency and revolving with a perfect rhythm, yet condemned by its very nature to serve as a cooling electric fan. There is in it breath—vigorous, consistent, sweeping—but it is not the breath of life. It is all that it was mathematically and validly designed to be: that is at once its tribute and its detraction.

Shaw said of Forbes-Robertson's Hamlet: "He plays as Shakespeare should be played, on the line and to the line, with the utterance and acting simultaneous, inseparable and in fact identical. Not for a moment is he solemnly conscious of Shakespeare's reputation or of Hamlet's momentousness in literary history: on the contrary, he delivers us from all these boredoms. . . ." Barrymore's utterance and acting are not always identical: one detects a self-consciousness of the importance of great occasion, of the austerity and traditions of the role. Barrymore goes at the role as a brave and gallant soldier goes into battle: with flags flying in his Sem Benelli heart and with Richard's shining sword raised courageously aloft—but with just a trace of very human timidity and fear holding him in. He is glamorous; he is percipient; he is sound in apprehension; he is eminently

praiseworthy—but is he the complete Hamlet?

Arthur Hopkins' share in the production is in the main very fine indeed. Though critical integrity may be on the side of those who object to his corporeal elimination of the Ghost and the substitution therefor of a flickering light (perhaps not quite the new and original device that certain of my colleagues believe), I am rather fetched by it. He has done what is generally an excellent job. Robert Jones' investiture, finely coloured and beautiful, stems from the famous Craig designs for the same play. It is Craig with overtones of Pirchan, Alfred Roller, Sturm, Wirk and others; but Jones has handled the synthesis with no little skill. His lighting is particularly good. The supporting company is an able one—in spots.

VII

BRIEFER mention. Bataille's "The Love Child" is a stereotyped lugubrious French vaudeville on the subject of wives, mistresses and illegitimate children, with the scene transplanted and made American by the naïve device of giving the essentially French characters American names and using perpendicular in place of horizontal telephones. I can see nothing in it. Milne's "The Romantic Age" is very mild sentimental comedy, so sedulously and painstakingly "delicate" that one longs toward its middle for one of the characters to get up and throw a spittoon at another. Milne is a graceful writer who suffers from an excess of gentlemanliness. He is as indefatigably proper as a dancing master. This punctiliousness often contrives to put salt on the tail of an imagination that, rid of it to a degree, might very readily make a charming and spectacular flight. "Merton of the Movies" is a skilful dramatization of Harry Leon Wilson's novel by the Messrs. Kaufman and Connelly, its amusing materials become somewhat shopworn by virtue of theatrical repetition, but here again made engaging by an excellent performance of Merton on the part of young Glenn Hunter.

Confidences

By H. L. Mencken

I

THERE is some clumsy pussyfooting in Henry Ford's "My Life and Work" (*Doubleday*)—as, for example, in his discussion of his early partners—and there are chapters in which he ladles out platitudes with all the humorless passion of a Dr. Orison Swett Marden or a Dr. Frank Crane; but in the main it is a very plainspoken and intelligent book, and some of its principal ideas are of a quite extraordinary sagacity. I don't know whether the volume was written in the main by Ford himself or by his so-called collaborator, Samuel Crowther, but in any case Ford read it, approved it and signed it. A diligent study of it fills my heart with the conviction that the common view of him—that is, as of an ignoramus almost comparable to a King Kleagle of the American Legion, a chiropractor or a fresh-water university president—must be radically revised. The genesis of that common view, indeed, is almost too dubious to bear inspection: it only goes to show once more how easy it is to spread false ideas under a Republic. Ford first got into hot water by paying his slaves more than other automobile manufacturers paid them; he turned on another burner by opposing the crooks, political and financial, who shoved the American booboisie into the late war; he produced a renewed and fearful ebullition by suing the *Chicago Tribune* for lying about him, and he brought the temperature under him up to 10,000 degrees Fahrenheit by attacking the Jews. All of these acts grossly offended the camorra of patriotic usurers and shyster

newspaper proprietors which now runs the country. The result was that all news about Ford—and because he made so much money he was naturally always in the news—began to take on a bilious and pessimistic flavor. The second result was and is that the average American of today, particularly if consciously respectable, regards him as a sort of mixture of Karl Marx and Billy Sunday—that is, as a fool whose notions are not only foolish, but also dangerous, and even criminal.

Well, in his book Ford strikes back at his enemies, and as a neutral in all such vast and complex combats I am bound to say that he pretty well convinces me. What could be more adept and convincing, for example, than his *reductio ad absurdum* of the whole hocus-pocus of "efficiency" engineering—his devastating demonstration that all the inventions of the "psychologists" and "sociologists" who now play lice to industry are buncombe. Here is a man who has built up one of the largest manufacturing plants in the world, who pays more to his workmen than any rival and sells his product cheaper, and yet he boasts that there is not an "expert" in his whole plant, and that none of the elaborate machinery of cost-accounting devised by such frauds is in operation in his place. His scheme for keeping his eye on production is so astoundingly simple that, to a Rotary Club lecturer, it must needs appear insane. Every afternoon, when work is done, the foreman of each workroom writes down the number of slaves he has had at work during the day and the number of parts he has turned out. Then he divides the latter by the former

—and that is his whole report. If the daily figures show a rise, he is called up and ordered to give an account of himself. If they show a decline he gets a note praising him as a competent fellow, and maybe a raise in wages. All such austere and stenographic reports, when they reach the main office in the evening, are put upon an adding machine and added up. If the total today is larger than yesterday, Ford finds out instantly what shops are at fault. If it is less, he begins figuring on another cut in the price of flivvers. Would it be possible to imagine anything simpler? Or more workable? The disease is instantly apparent, and the diagnosis and treatment follow immediately. Maybe there is not enough light in the offending shop. Maybe the men working there have to take too many steps. Maybe some of them are unfitted for their jobs, and ought to be sent elsewhere. Maybe the materials they have to work with are inferior. Whatever the cause, it is detected and remedied the next day—and by practical shopmen, not by “experts.” These shopmen have no high-sounding titles. They have no luxurious offices, but keep on the jump all day. They never draw up charts. They know nothing about abscissæ. They are never given any time off to address Summer Schools and Kiwanis Clubs.

Ford’s capital discovery in manufacturing was this: that very few of the operations in an ordinary plant require any intelligence in the operator—in brief, that a moron is quite as useful in industry as a Socrates. This discovery, practically applied, has got him a bad name among economic and political sentimentalists—which is to say, among the messianic sophomores and unhappy professors who do all the writing for the Liberal weeklies. It is argued that Ford has made slaves of his workingmen. Well, suppose he has? Is there any complaint from the slaves? If so, I have yet to hear of it. My spies in Detroit report that the men in the Ford plants stick to their jobs longer than the men in the other auto-

mobile plants out there, and seem to have more money, and are generally more contented. They drink better liquor than even judges and bishops drink in New York; they wear good clothes and have money in the bank; communism seems to be as dead among them as Socinianism or the Pelagian heresy; their wives spend the afternoons window-shopping, home-brewing, or lolling in the movie parlors. The Ford plant is an open shop, and apparently labor-leader-proof. There is no collective bargaining, and yet there is never any dispute about wages. No one is paid double for overtime. No one, in fact, is paid anything for overtime; the man who works an hour extra today gets an hour off tomorrow; if he wants to he can accumulate such extra hours, and take a whole day, or even a week. In normal times any man who applies for work, so long as he is not palpably dying or insane, is given a job. If he is just out of the penitentiary, no one notes it. If he has only one leg or one arm he is put at something that a one-legged or one-armed man can do. If he is blind there is also a place for him, and at full wages: there are more good jobs for blind men, says Ford, than there are blind men. No matter what his experience or equipment, he is started at the bottom—that is, at \$6 a day. If he has brains, he rises quickly and automatically. If, on the contrary, he is a vegetable he remains where he started.

As I have said, Ford’s discovery that morons, under proper supervision, make good workmen has got him a good many sharp words from the *Survey*, the *New Republic* and other such guardians of the downtrodden. These gazettes allege, and with much show of evidence, that he converts his men into machines—that a man who spends eight hours a day, week in and week out, dipping pieces of steel into a vat of enamel, or daubing grease on axles, or picking up little nuts and screwing them on little bolts—that such a man, after a couple of years, is a mere automaton, and hence unfitted to

render a just verdict upon the Fordney tariff or the recall of judges. A true bill, certainly. But Ford's reply to it is simple and convincing. He is, he says, not the Lord God Jehovah, but merely a modest manufacturer of cheap, durable and infinitely hideous automobiles. Such fellows were made as they are, not by him, but by the Jehovah aforesaid. They keep on picking up nuts because they are incapable of doing anything of a greater complexity—above all, they keep on doing it because they like it. Ford finds that, taking his workmen as they run, only 25% of them "are even willing to be straw-bosses"—apparently the lowest order of foremen—and that only 5% "have the willingness to accept the additional responsibility and the additional work which goes with the higher places." The vast majority of men, he says, "want to stay put. They want to be led. They want to have everything done for them and to have no responsibility. . . . The difficulty is not to discover men to advance, but men who are willing to be advanced." The truth of this is certainly known to every man who has ever employed labor in large masses. It is the unanswerable answer to all industrial sentimentalism, to every variety of economic utopianism, to democracy itself. And yet what other large employer of labor has ever said it?

But Ford's book is not given over wholly to a discussion of his great can-factory. He is most interesting and instructive, of course, when he talks of what he knows best, but he is also full of shrewdness when he alights upon other subjects, for example, the railroads and hospital management. His brief chapter upon the hospital he has founded at Detroit seems to me to be the most intelligent treatise upon the general theme that I have ever read—and I am rather more familiar than most laymen with such literature. Here the public function of a hospital is stated with admirable clarity and good sense, and the most practicable methods of discharging it are simply

set forth. Very few great American hospitals, it must be obvious, are of any tangible value to the great majority of the citizens who, whether directly or indirectly, support them. They offer free board to paupers and they offer enormously expensive board to the rich, but the average man must keep out of them if he would remain solvent. In Detroit Ford has sought to provide a hospital for this average man. His plan is excellent—and it will work. So will his plan for operating his railroad. It is sublimely simple: kick out all the financiers and put in railroad men. . . . But I had better shut off my hymn to him: he may send me a Lizzie. Such a book, for all its merits, is fundamentally a sour apple for a literary man. My taste is not for manufacturers, but for artists. Nevertheless, I beg amnesty for saying here and now that I have never read anything by George Santayana one-half so sound and important as this modest tome by the Detroit E. W. Howe.

II

THE sensitive reader, I suspect, will find his enjoyment of Harry Kemp's "autobiographical narrative," "Tramping on Life" (*Liveright*), conditioned by various impediments. For one thing, there is the author's innocent way of doing violence upon the English language, so that the word *teat*, for example, is transformed into the phonetic *tit*, and *to negate* rears its hideous head as a verb, and *convert*, the noun, is converted into *convertce*, an ill-favored monster if there ever was one! For another thing, there is Dr. Kemp's equally innocent but even more disconcerting indifference to the rules of what is called, among capitalists and other such vermin, honor. He is, as everyone knows, a professional poet and radical, and so it is but natural that a large part of his book should be given over to his affairs of sentiment, for poets know how to love and radicals like to talk—but is it permissible, even in Greenwich Village, for

the hero of an adultery to placard the lady as brazenly and cruelly as Kemp does here? The fact that he conceals her lawful name beneath a *nom de guerre* only makes his offending worse, for that *nom de guerre* is so thin that even a policeman could penetrate it, and once he has her behind it he strips off all her clothes with almost moral frenzy. Very little, indeed, is left to the imagination. It is an autopsy rather than a reminiscence. Add the fact that the injured husband is one who, at the time of the invasion of his prerogative, was boarding and lodging Kemp free of charge, and had but recently helped him materially in other ways, and some measure of the offense begins to reveal itself. I see no way out: a bachelor myself, I yet owe a certain duty to the whole pathetic race of husbands. Accordingly, I spit on my hands, put on the black cap, cough archepiscopally and herewith denounce Kemp publicly as the damndest bounder who has ever had the honor of entering my presence. Let him be kicked out into the alley! And let the housemaid empty upon him the vessel which he himself mentions more than once in his fascinating pages.

I say fascinating pages, and mean it. The book violates the decencies, but it is extremely diverting reading for all that. Kemp not only has a picturesque and amusing story to tell; he tells it in an extremely skilful manner, despite his occasional difficulties with English. It is naïve, it is bombastic, it is sometimes almost appalling, but there is never a moment when it is dull. The people who march through it are genuinely alive; the successive episodes, real and imaginary, are presented with dramatic force; there is everywhere a certain fine shrewdness and impudence. Kemp is thoroughly convinced, obviously, that the moving impulse of his whole life has been the divine afflatus—that all his acts have been determined by his overwhelming passion to make lovely verses, to get beauty into words. But the truth is, and it is quickly apparent, that his actual motive has

always been the far more lowly desire to make a sensation—that he has been exhibitionist far more than poet. His poetry, in fact, is poetry only in spots; alongside some undeniably fine lyrics he has printed a great deal of raucous doggerel. But his yearning to astound and alarm the yokelry, to cut a gaudy figure in the world, to be pointed out and gaped at, even if only in Kansas or Macdougall alley, is visible brilliantly from end to end of his narrative, and, to do him credit, he by no means attempts to conceal it, though, as I say, he sees himself primarily as artist rather than as showman. On the whole, it seems to me that his existence has been of profit to the Republic. He swam into public notice at a time when the literature of the land was suffering from a bad case of respectability. The reigning novelists were beginning to take on the sober dignity of headwaiters or Episcopal rectors; even the poets were beginning to wash, comb their hair and join the Freemasons. Into this sombre scene leaped Kemp with not only vine-leaves in his hair, but also startling wisps of hay. He had on a coat that was all rags and tatters. He demanded, not the chautauqua salute, but a hand-out. He came, not from some New England college town, but from a Texas jail. He was a sensation, and he was, in the main, a salubrious sensation. He taught the poets that respectability was dangerous to them. He yanked the crape off their door-knob.

Even his violation of the common reticences may have some esoteric use and value, perhaps even a moral use and value. It may teach the ladies of letters to be more careful in their love affairs. No doubt some of them, at least down in the Village, are already trembling, for "Tramping on Life" stops short with the episode whose retailing I have denounced, and there will certainly be another volume. In it, for one, I hope that Dr. Kemp essays a defense of himself, and sets forth in some detail the provisions of his private code. Years ago, having remonstrated with

George Moore for blabbing in much the same manner, I was confronted with the reply that the transaction described had happened a long while before—and that it was quite proper to mention the lady's name after a quarter of a century. Kemp shortens the moratorium. Nevertheless, even Kemp must have a certain lingering squeamishness; there must be a closed season during which he is as silent as the Cid. How long is it? Ten years? Five years? A year? I apply for light in all seriousness. Matters of morals and honor interest me intensely; they are too little discussed in These States. A full-length treatise on the subject would be worth reading and reviewing. . . .

III

MORE volumes of biography and autobiography: "Enrico Caruso," by Pierre V. R. Key (*Little*); "The Second Empire," a vivisection of Napoleon III, by Philip Guedalla (*Putnam*); "The Life and Letters of Walter H. Page," by Burton J. Hendrick (*Doubleday*); "Letters of James Gibbons Huneker," edited by Josphine Huneker (*Scribner*); "Autobiography of Countess Leo Tolstoy," (*Heubsch*); "Twenty-One Letters of Ambrose Bierce," edited by Samuel Loveman (*Kirk*); "The Adventure of Living," by John St. Loe Strachey (*Putnam*). The Caruso volume is a competent official biography; there are some very *pianissimo* passages, but it will please the admirers of the late tenor. The Huneker collection is also marked by the use of the left-hand pedal: all of good James's Rabelaisian touches have been discreetly edited out. Nevertheless, it represents him quite as accurately as most of his books represent him. The Bierce book, a thin pamphlet in boards, obviously put out to tempt collectors, is a piece of unmitigated impudence. A circular used to advertise it says that it discloses "the secret of his (Bierce's) startling disappearance." It discloses nothing of the sort. At the end there is a brief and formal note in which

Bierce says that he is "going away to South America," but is it seriously to be argued that Bierce would tell the truth about his plans to a relative stranger, and yet conceal it from his oldest and most intimate friends? The appearance of such volumes adds a new terror to the ordinary pains of hell. The editor, Loveman, is a poet who apparently asked Bierce to help him sell his wares. The result was a polite exchange of letters, but there is scarcely a word in any of them that justifies printing them. To them the editor prefixes a bombastic preface containing some gratuitous and nonsensical criticism of Hergesheimer and Cabell.

"From Printer to President: the Story of Warren G. Harding," by Sherman A. Cuneo (*Dorrance*), is an ecstatic volume by a leading member of the Harding I-Knew-Him-When Club. In the main it is garbage, but it contains at least one nugget: the news that Dr. Harding, like nearly all other printers, is a confirmed and lifelong practitioner of the dying art of tobacco chewing. He is the first adept, I believe, to sit in the White House since Grover Cleveland. McKinley was a heavy smoker, but never chewed; Roosevelt seldom even smoked; Taft, during the greater part of his term, was in the hands of doctors who, following the invariable custom of their trade, warned him against tobacco; as for Woodrow, he seldom got beyond an occasional cigarette. But Harding tackles the whole plug with his naked teeth: M. Cuneo says specifically that he bites it off, disdaining the use of shears or jack-knife (p. 45). It is a practice that will gain support for his statecraft in the South, where the ancient art still flourishes, despite the insidious spread of Yankee lizziness. No more than a dozen years ago all the Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States, during the hearing of the great causes which occupy them, solemnly masticated the natural leaf. More than once, as a young reporter, I sat in their august chamber and observed the deftness and delicacy with

which one learned jurist would duck his head behind his neighbor to expectorate. But those days are no more. Of the nine Justices now flourishing, only four carry plugs in their hip-pockets, and only one of these ever takes a bite on the actual bench. We live in effeminate days. The old race of heroes has died out.

Guedalla's "Second Empire" I may discuss at length on some later day. Countess Tolstoy's slim book is dishonest, but extremely instructive: the very artful *apologia* of a loving wife who drove her husband out of the house, and sent him to die like a tramp under a hedge. The two volumes of Walter H. Page's letters and the "subjective autobiography" of Strachey I hand over to the historians of the late war—if frank and competent ones ever appear in America. Page's story is that of a fanatical and almost pathological Anglomaniac, and makes very instructive reading. The English fetched him quite easily by playing upon his vanities. Strachey, who is editor of the *Spectator*, tells how he did his bit during the war, *i. e.*, how he rounded up the American correspondents in London, lathered them with goose-grease and so made them safe for the great moral cause. On page 341 he gives a list of his patients.

IV

"HOW I LOST MY JOB AS A PREACHER," by Pastor J. D. M. Buckner, of the Methodist *Schul* at Aurora, Neb. (*Selbstverlag*), is the moving story of a prairie dominie who took to reading such evil authors as Huxley, Spencer and Darwin, and so got sand and gravel into the gears of his simple Christian faith and eventually found himself deprived of his cure. What finished him, apparently, was an atheistic attack upon II Kings, ii, 23, 24, as follows:

And he [Elisha] went up from thence unto Beth-el; and as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head.

And he turned back, and looked on them,

and cursed them in the name of the Lord. And there came forth two she bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them.

Against this favorite and familiar text, so precious to every Methodist who learned it at his mother's knee, Pastor Buckner launched objections worthy of the village Ingersoll, and so he found himself facing the Right Rev. Homer C. Stuntz, D.D., chief *didaskalos* of the faithful out in those parts, and presently his flock at Aurora faced a new shepherd, and he himself was reducing to lecturing in the chautauquas for a living. His portrait, printed in his pamphlet of protest, shows him to be a buxom old gentleman, and the text reveals him as one who takes the Beatitudes seriously. Nevertheless, despite my full agreement with his exegesis, I find myself unable to sympathize with him in his difficulty. When Monsignor Stuntz and the other dignitaries of the Omaha Synod argued that a man who held such ideas was an enemy of Methodism and should be ashamed to take Methodist money, they were, it seems to me, on firm ground. If Methodism means anything at all, it means a literal acceptance of every statement of fact in Holy Writ, and particularly of all those statements that are most obviously savage and idiotic. Take away, as Gamaliel would say, that supreme commitment, and you take away the whole theology of the church, and therewith its whole ethics.

Methodism flourishes among morons, in truth, simply and almost solely because it is savage—because it stresses those barbarous parts of the Old Testament which give a weak and inferior man a certain sadistic satisfaction. In practical politics, as everyone knows, the mob is always on the side of the fellow who is violent and aggressive—in other words, of the fellow who is putting some other fellow to the torture. It wants to hear nothing of defenses; above all, it wants to hear nothing of charity and forgiveness. So, too, in religion. The creeds that fetch the boob are always creeds that know how

to damn. The Catholic Church, in the days when it swept the Western World, had a sword in one hand and a torch in the other. Mariolatry, the cult of kindness and compassion, was an after-thought; no doubt it was invented to placate the civilized minority. The Methodist Church in America is not yet confronted with the problem of a civilized minority, in spite of Dr. Buckner's belief that his heresies are widely held. The overwhelming sentiment of the membership is a sentiment that favors the propagation of the faith with the tar-pot, the feather pillow and the policeman's club. It is pre-eminently a cult of hate, tyranny and rough house. That is why it is so hospitable to the astounding buffooneries of Dr. Billy Sunday and other such bellicose clowns, and that is why it is so hot for Prohibition and all the other nonsensical perunas in the moral armamentarium. These quack cures for evil are favored violently, not because there is any plausible probability that they will do any good, but simply and solely because they are brutal—because they involve the bitter persecution, behind a safe file of policemen, of all persons who question them. Such persecutions stir the blood of inferior men. Taken singly, they must grovel and bend the knee. But united under the battered cross of Christ they can pursue, corral and torture their betters.

I thus find myself unable to give Pastor Buckner any consolation. If he believes, as he says, that he can hold that violence is anti-Christian and yet remain a good Methodist, then I can only say that, to me at least, he seems to be a gentleman laboring under a very serious error.

Brief Notices

THE NORTHWARD COURSE OF EMPIRE, by Vilhjalmur Stefansson (*Harcourt*). A continuation of the author's effort, first announced in "The Friendly Arctic," to prove that the polar regions are inhabitable for white men, and could supply the world with a great deal of food, especially fresh meat. A book rather over-earnest and polemical, but nevertheless interesting.

BOOKS AND CHARACTERS, by Lytton Strachey

(*Harcourt*). A collection of the author's early reviews and essays, mainly written before he learned how to write. Competent, but by no means inspired.

ETIQUETTE, by Emily Post (*Funk-Wagnalls*). An enormous tome, leaving little to chance, fancy and the imagination. Some curious customs and prejudices crop up. Why is it proper to put *Esq.* after a man's name on personal letters, and *Mr.* before it on formal invitations? Why is it proper for a fashionable gal to go to the theatre with her beau in Philadelphia and Baltimore, two very conservative towns, and a loose act in New York, where the line separating harlots from virgins is almost undiscernible?

LIGHT INTERVIEWS WITH SHADES, by Robert Webster Jones (*Dorrance*). Extremely obvious and laborious humor.

BURIED CITIES, by Jennie Hall (*Macmillan*). An excellent book of elementary archeology for boys, well planned and beautifully illustrated.

THE BOOK OF LIFE, by Upton Sinclair (*Sinclair*). Three volumes in one: "The Book of the Mind," "The Book of the Body" and "Love and Society." A compendium of all Sinclair's current ideas, all based upon the mystical doctrine that "human beings are meant to be happy on this earth." But what evidence is there for that doctrine? As for me, I have never been able to find any. It seems to me to be just as reasonable to argue that the central purpose of nature is to make man unhappy.

WHAT PROHIBITION HAS DONE TO AMERICA, by Fabian Franklin (*Harcourt*). A headlong and effective attack upon the whole Methodist *Kaisertum*, by the editor of the *Weekly Review*. Dr. Franklin proposes a substitute for the Eighteenth Amendment, abandoning national Prohibition but putting control of the liquor trade in the hands of Congress.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER AND OTHER STORIES, by Mark Twain (*Harper*). Seven sketches, including "Captain Stormfield." Uniform with the other red-bound volumes in the very unsatisfactory Harper edition of the author.

FOOTBALL AND HOW TO WATCH IT, by Percy D. Haughton (*Jones*). But why watch it?

THE AGRICULTURAL BLOC, by Arthur Capper (*Harcourt*). A political tract by a Kansas politician, mingling occasional sense with a great deal of buncombe.

IMMORTALITY, by Alexander Kadison (*Truth-Seeker*). An extremely feeble statement of the agnostic position.

SINCE CÉZANNE, by Clive Bell (*Harcourt*). A book full of dogmatic asseverations, but strangely lacking in illumination. I have read it diligently, and still remain unenlightened as to what Cézanne and his successors tried to do.

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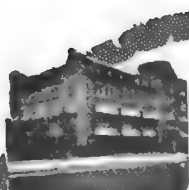
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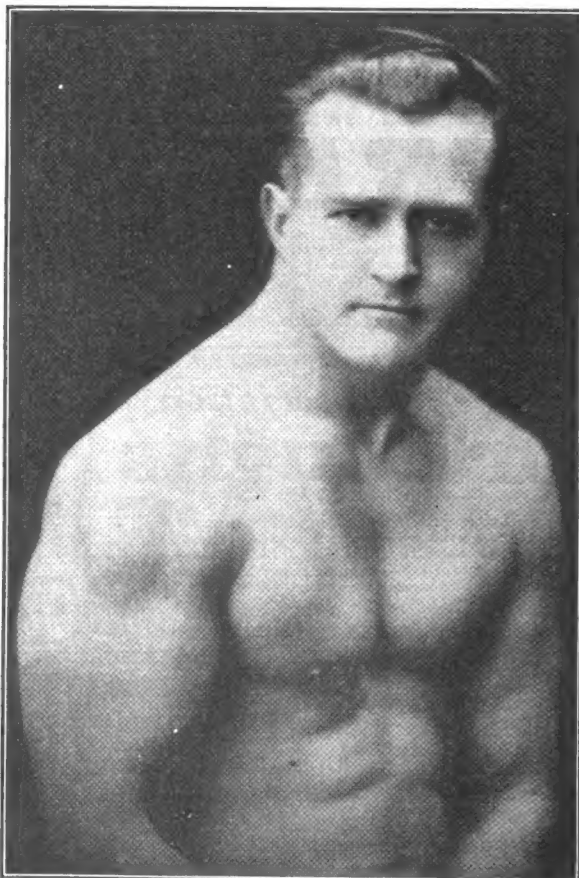
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